

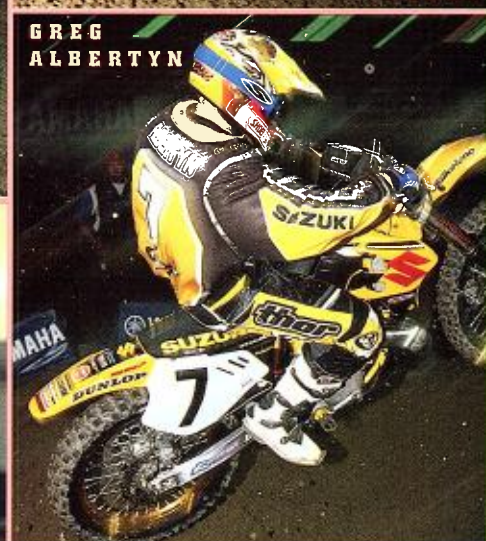
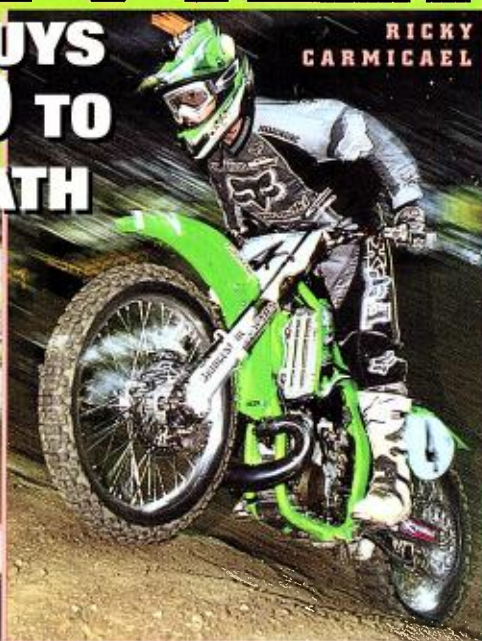
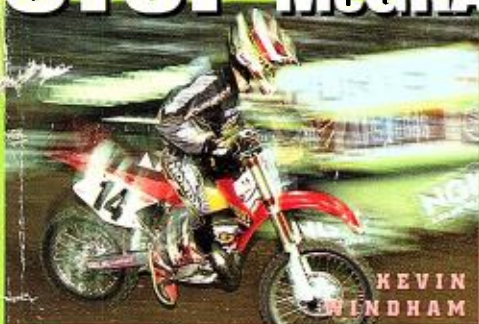
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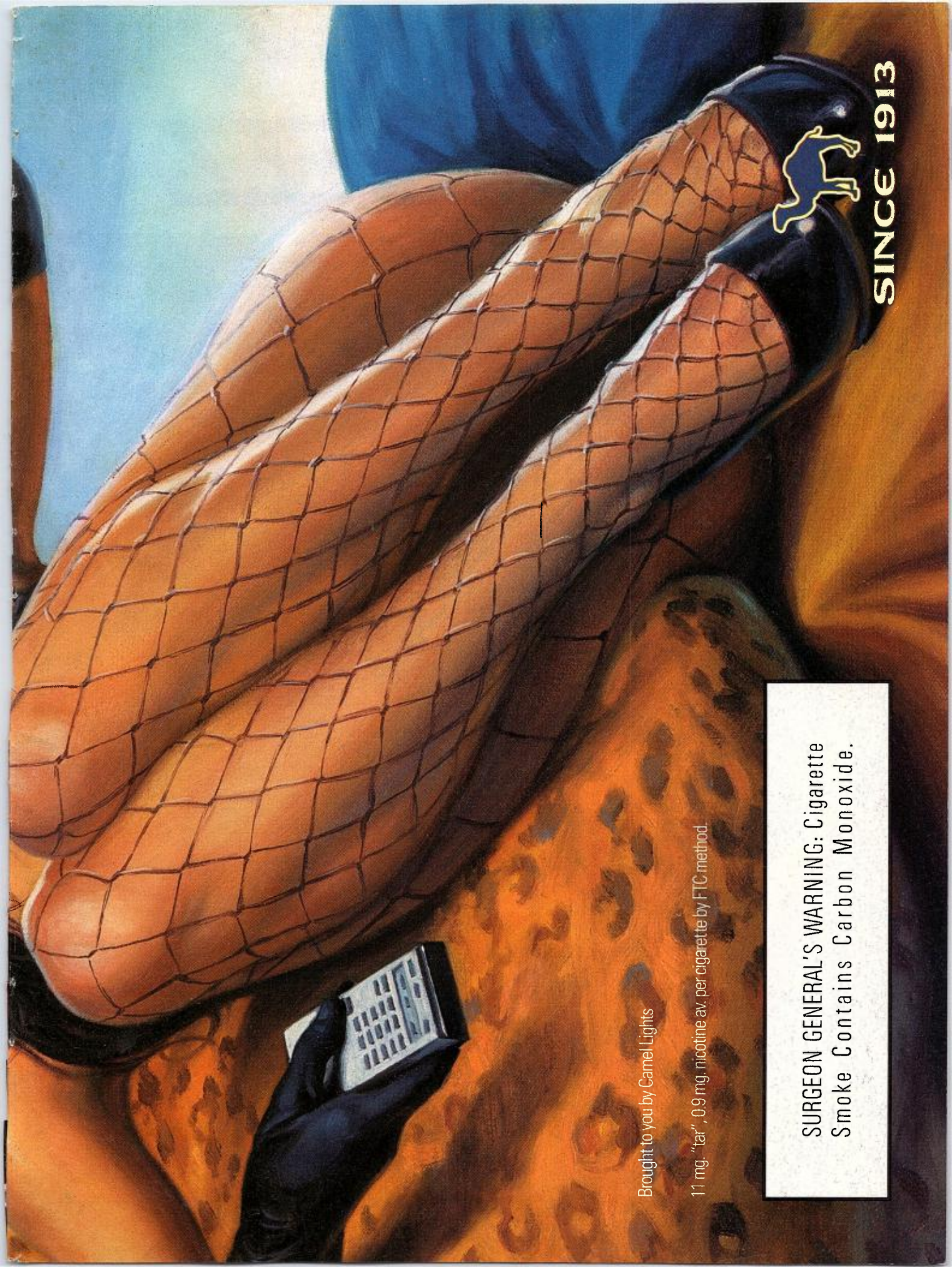
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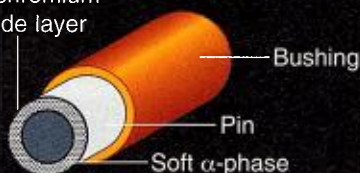


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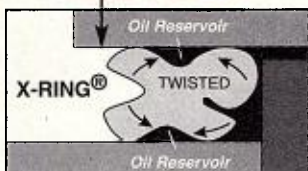


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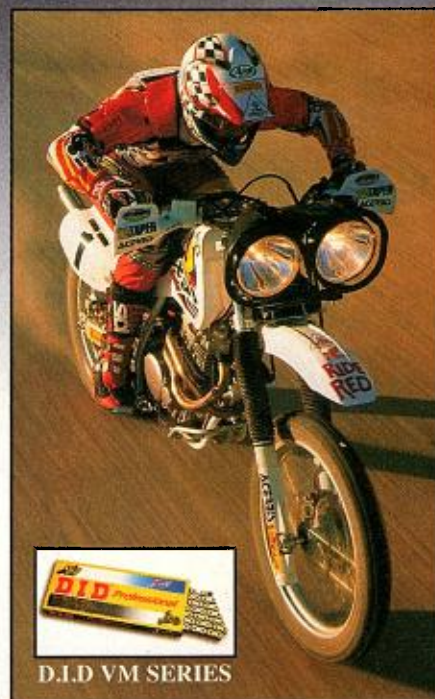
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How did the off-road machines survive the nonstop action? *By Karel Kramer*

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KTM 400 E/XC • Suzuki DR-Z400 • VOR 400 Euduro • Yamaha WR400F

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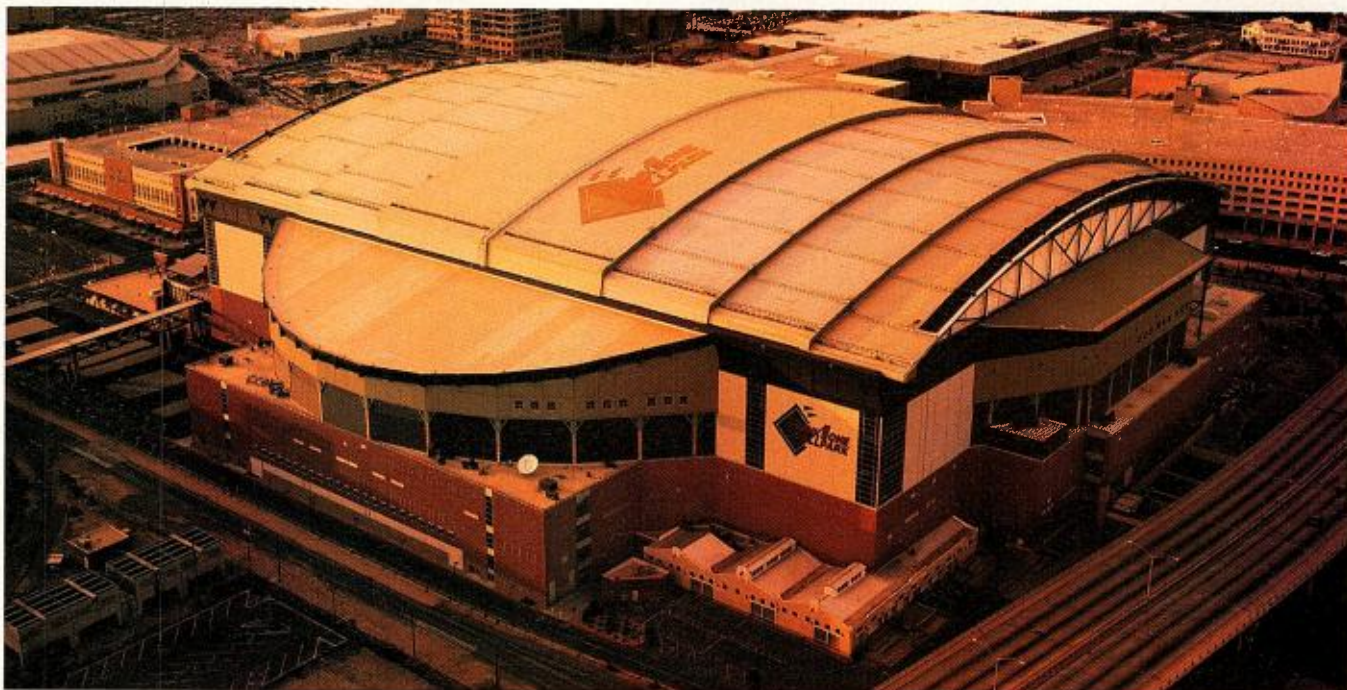
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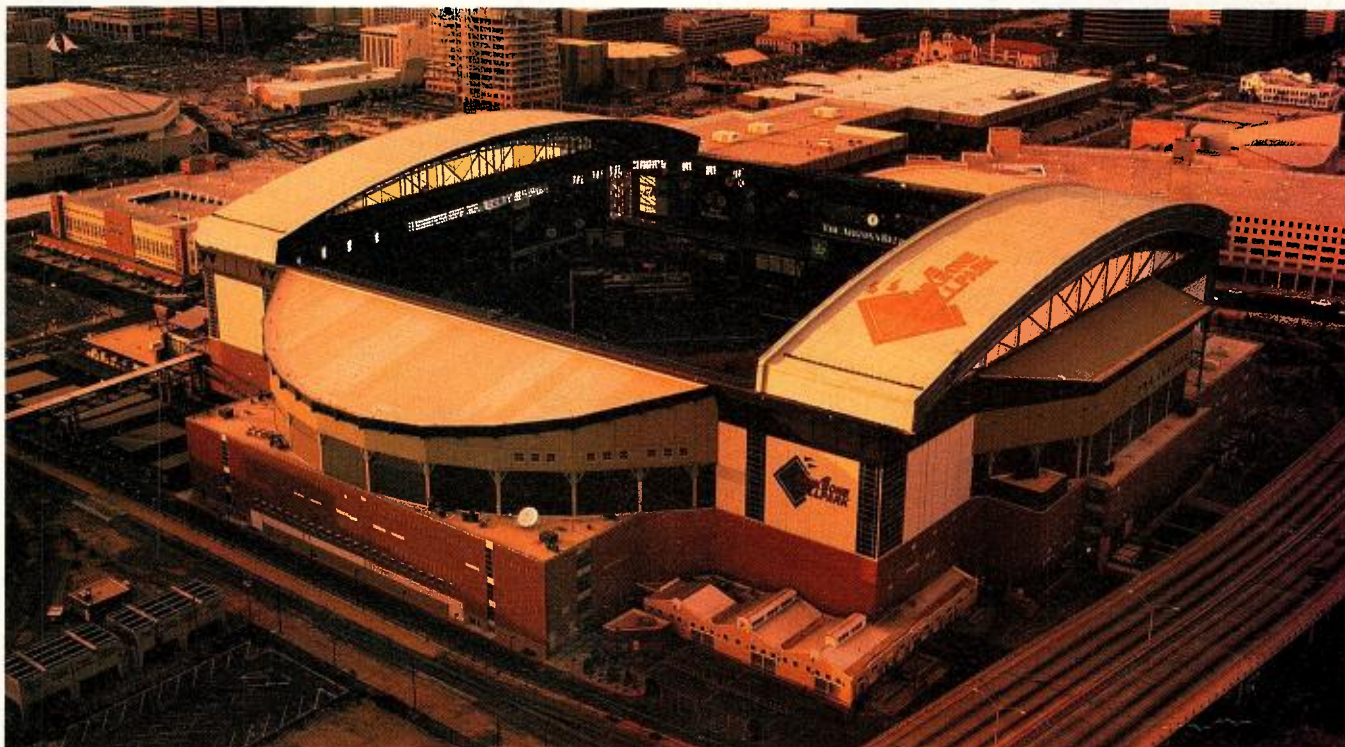
What have Suzuki and Yoshimura done to prepare this bike for the grueling three-hour GNCC races?

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MAY 2009
Issue 210



THE SUPERCROSS MUST BE IN TOWN.



Few things go higher in the air than a Supercross rider. As the Presenting Sponsor of the EA Sports Supercross Series, we should know.

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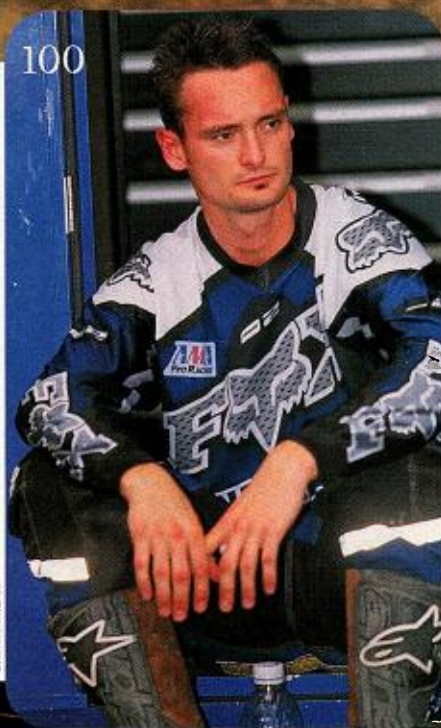


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GARTH MILAN



KEN FAUGHT

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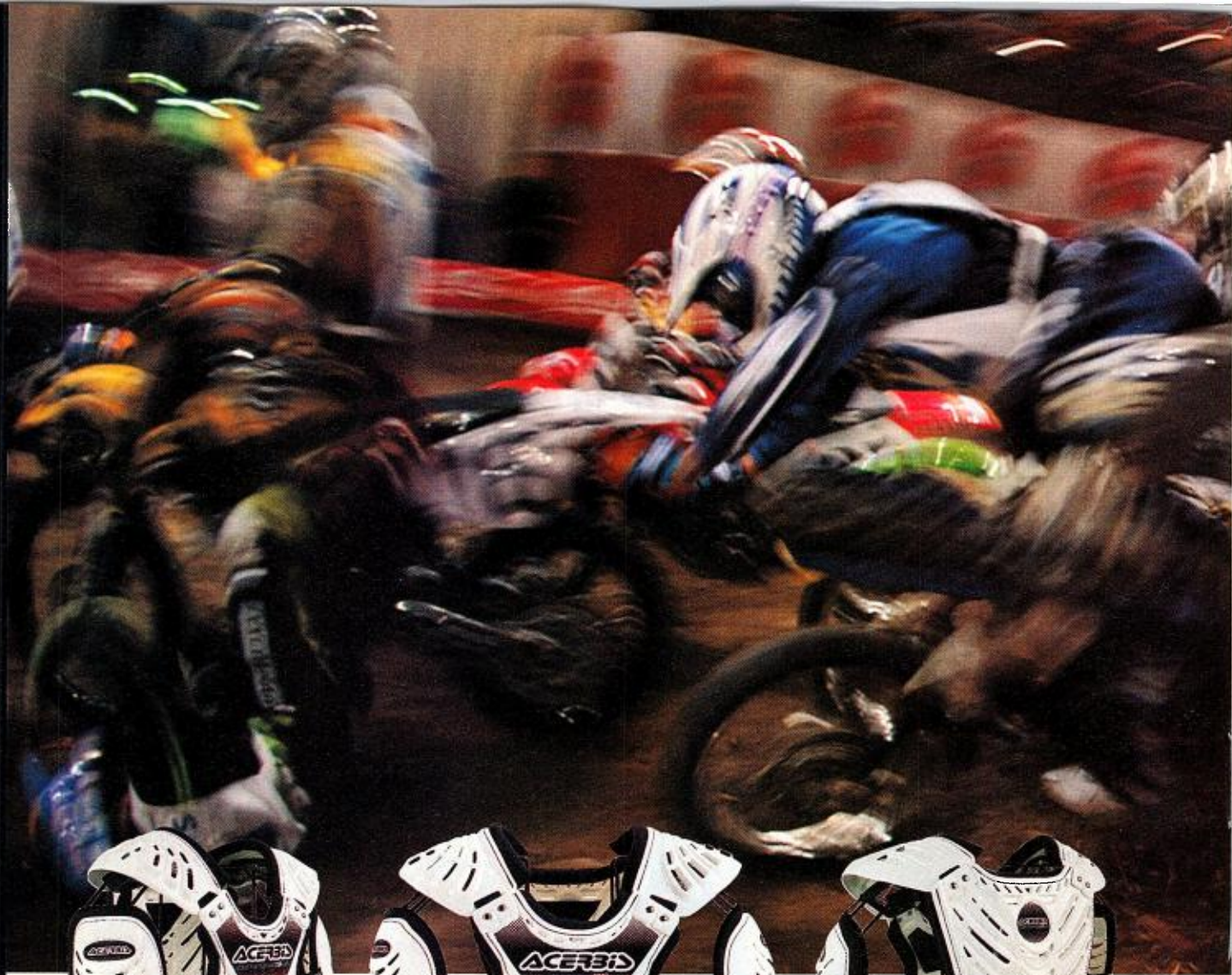
The 20-inch front tire is just for factory riders at the moment. Would it do your bike any good? Check it out. *By Scott Hoffman*

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Setting up to make passes over small jumps with turns following.

ON THE COVER: It's been a wild and wacky supercross season and a berserk time for off-road four-strokes. We cover them all this month. Check out our blurb in "Tear Offs" for the full story on this month's cover. Photos by Ken Faught, Garth Milan and Mark Kariya.

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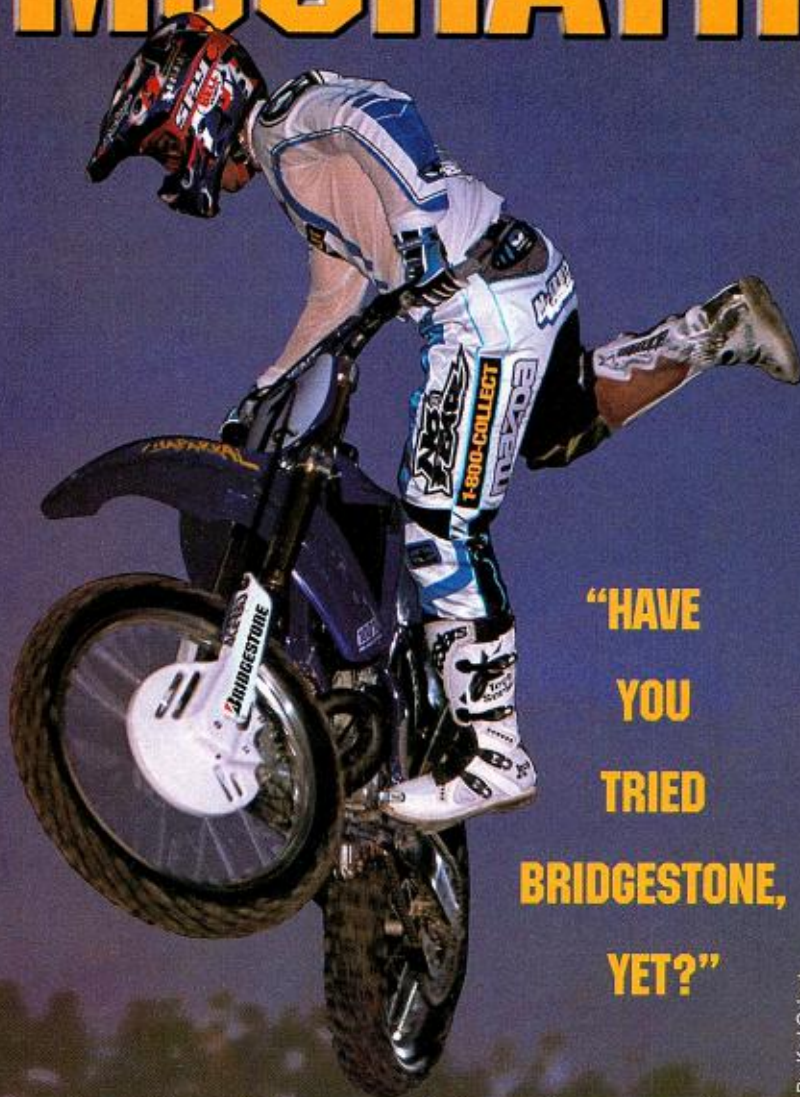
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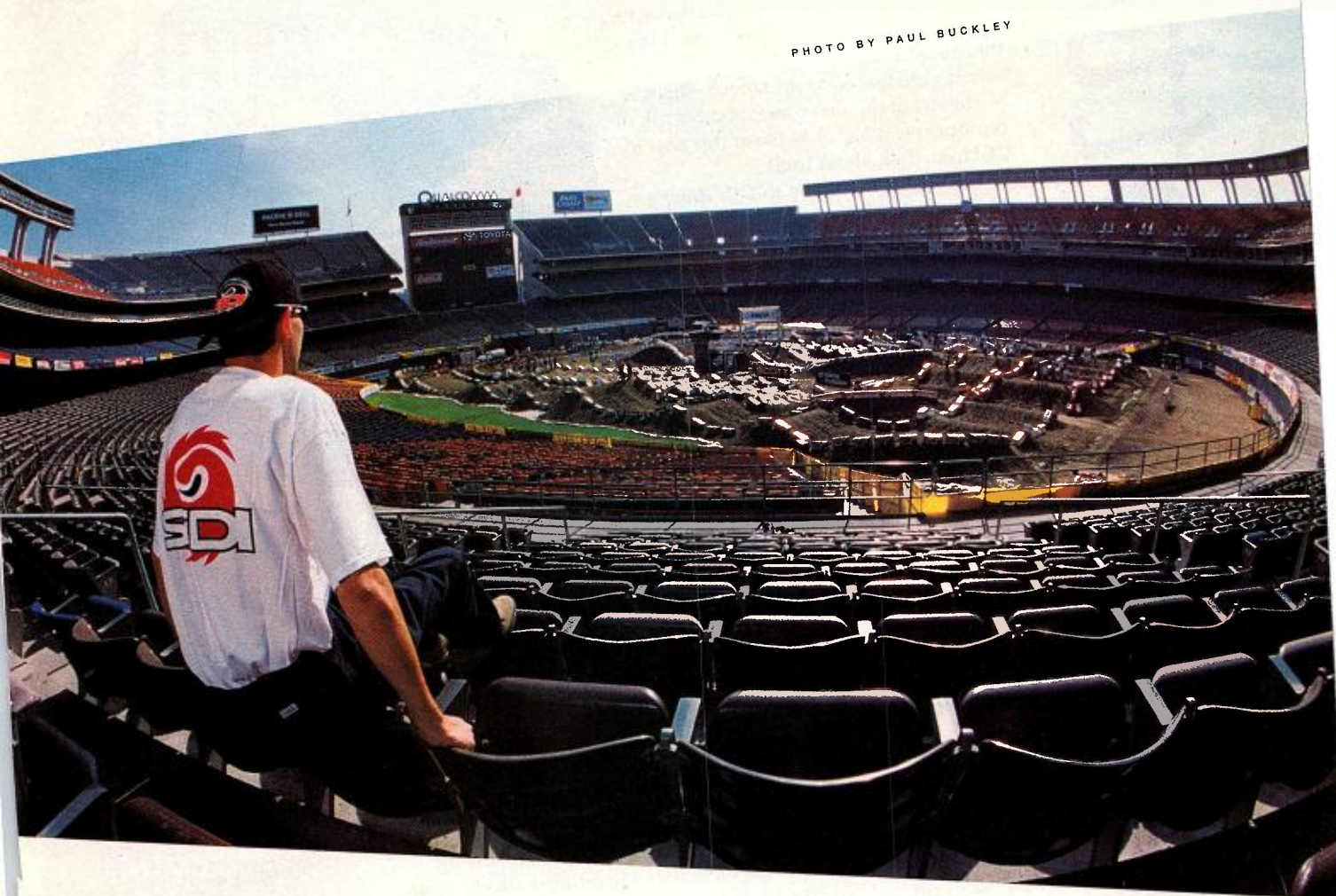
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THE CONTENDER.

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Hearing Footsteps



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Stuck Throttle

WHAT REEKS?

A month and a half ago on another adventure deep inside the rain forests of Costa Rica, I stopped by a local zoo—the type where you can actually interact with the animals. Back then, I thought the monkey cage smelled bad, but that was nothing compared to the stench which wafted from the sheet-metal bodywork of our borrowed motor home at this year's 24-Hour. Talk about foul!

You see, an invitation to *Dirt Rider's* 24-Hour is harder to come by than an on-track photo credential at a supercross. You have better odds of having Jeremy McGrath come to your house and hand-deliver an autographed jersey than you have riding at the Petersen Ranch. As you can imagine, we get offered just about every bribe ever heard of in exchange for an armed escort onto the property. (No kidding, the ranch hands always pack heat!) People offer Super Bowl tickets, signed Hank Aaron baseball bats, all-expense-paid vacations to the Bahamas—you name it! You want to hang with guys like Malcolm Smith, Dick Bursleson, Larry Roeseler, Shane Watts, Mike LaRocco and Greg Albertyn, then it's going to cost you.

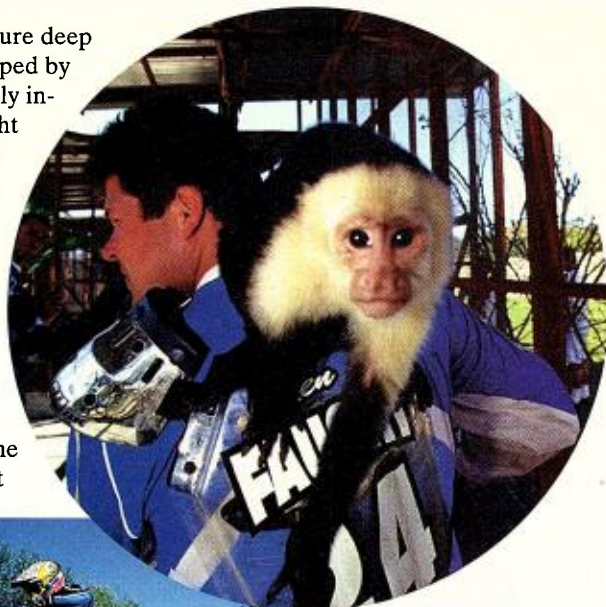
So my neighbor Jerry graciously allowed myself, Steve Lamson and Eric Phipps from Works Connection to call his Pace Arrow home for a few days. How did this sano home on wheels get so foul? What I forgot to mention is that Lamy has an intestinal problem of epic proportions. There always seems to be strange noises and smells that follow the champ's every move. One would think that a fine-tuned athlete would be at one with his body. Maybe he is, and the joke's on us! And I, of all people, should have known better. Whether we take the wives out for dinner, pull an all-nighter and head to Vegas or hang out at one of our daughters' birthday parties, Steve's always breaking, I mean, downright destroying wind.

Check this out! We were all lying there one night when the motor home suddenly started shaking. Now I realize that a six-ton motor home can react like a giant sail during gusts of wind, but it was completely calm outside, and it didn't feel like the usual California earthquake. The true culprit was Steve. Sleeping next to Phipps in a small pull-out bed, Lamy had just completed his brand of fumigation and was laughing so hard that everything started to quake. It was one of those closed-mouth, body-convulsing deals that teenage girls do when they're trying to conceal the giggles.

Over time, however, Lamson's leaky butt wasn't the biggest problem; instead, it was when our gear bags began to ferment. Earlier in the week we had been installing the final course markings, and the gear was now ripe. Understand that being around my three-year-old, I thought I had smelled just about everything in one digestive state or another. Turns out that I was wrong. Locked up in a warm, closed room for three days, the gear exuded pollutants into our breathing air that were so obnoxiously overpowering the AQMD was threatening to cite us. Three decades ago NASA could put people on the moon, but in 2000 manufacturers still haven't found a way to keep gear from rotting. And the gear bags were all different. Some had little trick compartments to put your street clothes in while others had what were intended to be well-placed vents. Hey fellas, it doesn't work!

Had it been anything but the 24-Hour then I guarantee you that I would have worn out my welcome with Jerry. Of course, Lamson's banned from the mobile premises, as you could imagine, and the Pace Arrow will eventually recover even though we left those same gear bags inside a full week after we returned from the ranch. It's a good thing that Jerry's wife is pregnant and has no reason to enter the motor home for the next few months, otherwise we'd be banned for life. I just wish that we knew a quicker way to air the thing out. I was kinda thinking we should do the 24-Hour twice a year.

—Ken Faught



PHOTOS: JOE BONNELLO

Lamy had just completed his brand of fumigation and was laughing so hard that everything started to quake.

SO WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE? NUMBER PLATES OR TURN SIGNALS?



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*DR-Z400E features electric start. DR-Z400 available with kick start.



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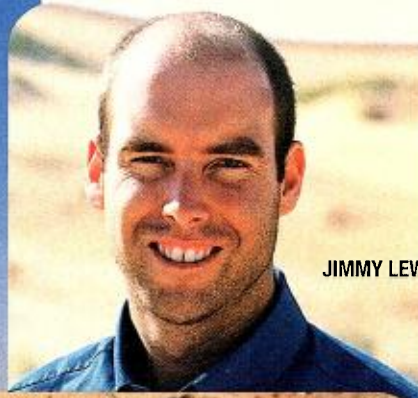
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'98-00 65
'98-00 125-380
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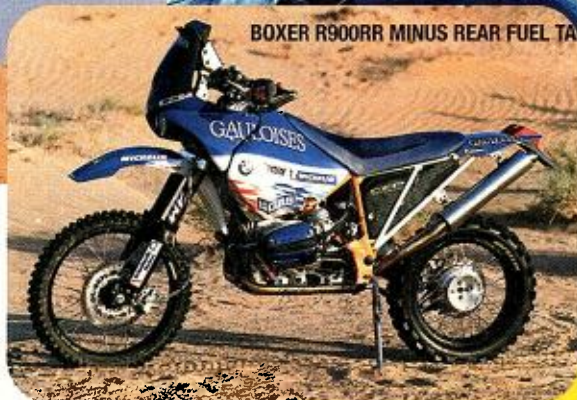


Offs Tear

RICHARD SAINTCT



JIMMY LEWIS



BOXER R900RR MINUS REAR FUEL TANKS

BMW TAKES THE TOP FOUR SPOTS AT PARIS-DAKAR-CAIRO RALLY

All it takes to win the most difficult and grueling off-road motorcycle race in the world is to withstand 13 days on a motorcycle with a total seat time of 49 hours, eight minutes and 56 seconds, dodge gun-toting terrorists and survive desolate African deserts and tire-swallowing sand dunes as far as the eye can see. Many more factors involved in this treacherous race make it difficult to endure.

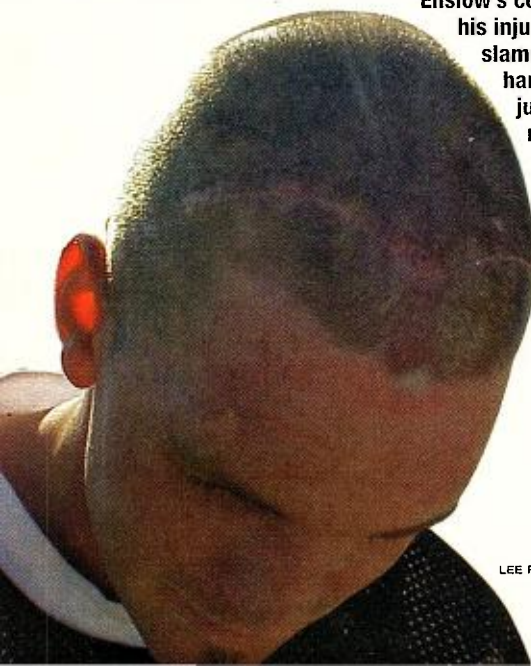
At the end, BMW motorcycles claimed the top four positions, with American Jimmy Lewis taking third. So when was the last time you thought of BMW as a threat to off-road racing? BMW only produces bitchin' sports cars and cruiser street bikes—right? This is very true in the U.S.A.; however, in Europe, BMW is all about winning when it comes to rally racing. Native French rider Richard Saintct racked up his second consecutive Dakar rally for the Beemer team. Of the top four BMW riders, three were riding single-cylinder F650RR bikes; Lewis rode a flat-twin Boxer R900RR. This marked the third Dakar Rally for Lewis and his best finish to date. Lewis would have had a fighting chance at the overall win if the solid foam inserts in his tires hadn't melted away from the searing heat and speed generated from his 90-horsepower twin.

FINAL RESULTS

1. Richard Saintct (France) BMW
2. Oscar Gallardo (Spain) BMW
3. Jimmy Lewis (U.S.A.) BMW
4. Jean Brucy (France) BMW
5. Jurgen Mayer (Germany) KTM

SCAR FACE: Remember when we told you last month that Seth went big and crashed even bigger? Well, this Herman Munster scar on Mr.

Enslow's coconut is the result of his injury. Let's just say that slamming your face into the handlebar after over-jumping a 200-foot-plus ramp-to-ramp jump does not feel very good. Needless to say, Seth is already back on a bike.



LEE REDDER



DOUBLE VISION?

Don't panic if your copy of *Dirt Rider*'s May issue looks different than your buddy's; subscriber copies are always different since they have an address label box. But for this May issue, subscribers' copies will be treated to a clean, off-road cover with one large, in-your-face image. Newsstand buyers need to be enticed into purchasing our magazine so their copies reflect the varied nature of the story content and have more bite-sized images. Feel free to obtain one of each!



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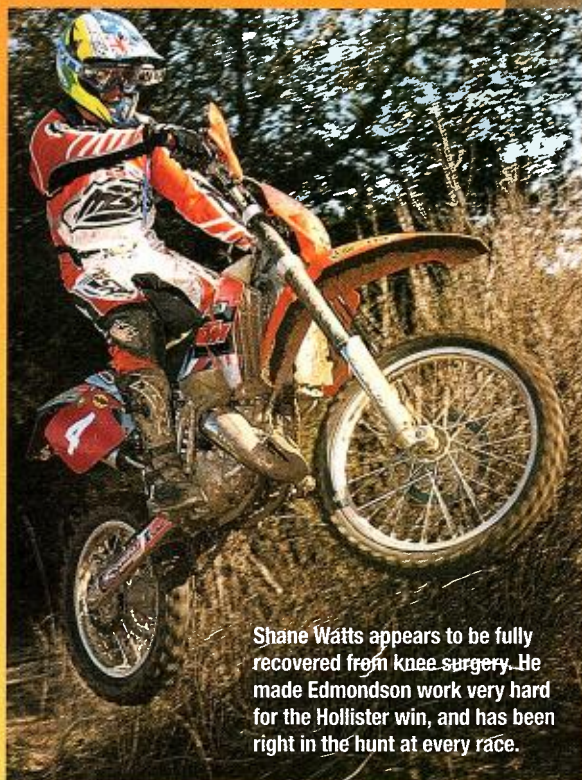
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DO THE DEW

Tear Offs



Paul Edmondson started off the year (his first with Team Green) with a win at the nonseries Tecate Hare Scrambles, then took the first two National Hare Scrambles races of the season.



Shane Watts appears to be fully recovered from knee surgery. He made Edmondson work very hard for the Hollister win, and has been right in the hunt at every race.



Team Suzuki Off-Road's Steve Hatch finished second to his ex-teammate in Tecate, but isn't contesting the HS series.

EDMONDSON WINS TECATE, HOLLISTER AND WILSEYVILLE HARE SCRAMBLES

Transplanted British enduro racer Paul Edmondson is accustomed to venturing into different countries. After all, he did it a lot en route to four world enduro championships.

Now, he's basing himself in Atlanta and crossed another border—this time into Baja California, Mexico—and came back with another victory on his résumé for winning the second Los Ancianos Motorcycle Club Tecate Hare Scrambles. It marked his 2000 debut on a Team Green KX250 and provided a welcome boost in confidence—plus the \$750 winner's prize—as he prepares for a year of both GNCCs and AMA National Hare Scrambles.

Defending AMA National Enduro Champion Ty Davis, Best in the Desert champ Destry Abbott, ISDE star Shane Watts, Baja 1000 winner Tim Staab, Baja 500 winner Jonah Street and many more made the trek to the race site about an hour east of the border town of Tecate.

Team Suzuki Off-Road's Steve Hatch rode in the runner-up slot most of the three hours in the GNCC-style event through gullies, rocks, sand washes and a variety of both fast dirt roads and tight, fresh-cut trails.

Desert star Destry Abbott made it a Team Green 1-3 and earned \$200 with his steady ride which was hampered somewhat by the dust, a tangle with a lapper and an admitted lack of

race fitness. Still, he had nothing but praise for the event: "The club does a good job putting the race on; I really enjoy it."

After serving notice to the competition at Tecate (a non-series event), Edmondson kicked off the AMA National Hare Scrambles Series with a three-second win aboard his Team Green KX250 at the Hollister Hills SVRA near Hollister, California, on February 6. He had to fend off a last-lap challenge by KTM 125-mounted Shane Watts while Team Green's Fred Andrews finished third, about a minute behind.

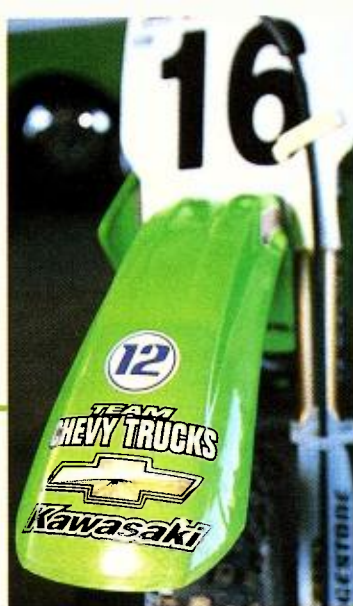
KTM's Brian and Patrick Garrahan, the number two- and three-ranked riders of the '99 series, respectively, rounded out the top five. Two-time and defending series champ Doug Blackwell ran out of gas on the last lap while running fifth.

Team Green desert racer Shane Esposito entered the 250A class a day after racing Adelanto and, despite massive blisters on both hands, handily took the A overall which placed him seventh overall.

A week later Edmondson was credited with the win in Wilseyville followed by KTM mates Garrahan and Watts in second and third. Garrahan and Watts crossed the line first in the mudfest, but they had missed part of the course so they were penalized. Those results are under protest.

—Mark Kariya

KEN FAUGHT



SUPPORT FOR BUTTON

Supercross racers may wage some fierce knock-down, drag-out battles against each other on the track but it's often all about camaraderie when the race is over. Following the terrible crash that could end Jimmy Button's racing career in motocross, fellow riders such as John Dowd and Jeremy McGrath showed their support by running Button's number 12 on their bikes. You can never say motorcycle racers don't have hearts.



AXO REVAMPS ITS BOOT
Boots are boots? Not even close. AXO is all about staying on the ball with new gear, and the introduction of the company's new RC5 boot is right around the corner. AXO has spent the time completely redesigning a boot that offers more comfort and flexibility without sacrificing durability. The RC5 will retail for \$259.99 and should be available in stores sometime in April.
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Tear Offs

CANNONDALE RIDING GEAR

The long-awaited release of the Cannondale MX400 is very near and Cannondale is getting geared up with a full line of riding gear and clothing. The Holeshot Pro Jersey and Holeshot Pro Pants (shown) are the flagship gear in its new apparel line. Gear runs from \$149.99 to \$199.00 for pants and \$39.99 to \$69.99 for jerseys. Assorted gloves, T-shirts and clothing are also available from \$19.99 to \$44.99. Call 877/357-6686 for a local dealer or log on to www.cannondale.com.

RANDOM NOTES

- Oops! If you were looking for the Blue Ribbon Coalition's web page and you were guided by our April '00 issue—we goofed. We printed www.sharetrails.com, but the correct address is www.sharetrails.org.
- Jeremy McGrath is now part owner of supercross.com along with former king of supercross Rick Johnson.
- Both Shane Watts and Mike Lafferty have re-signed with KTM to race the 2000 off-road race season.
- Geo Tedesco, who suffered a crash at the first Anaheim race was in a coma for three days following the event and has recovered, but has been advised by his doctor to hang up his riding gear.



2000 BBR FOUR-STROKE CONVERSIONS



The Brown brothers from Kent, Washington, never cease to amaze us with their unique ability to build or transform two-stroke motocrossers into ultrafun four-stroke weapons. This creation started life as a 2000 Honda CR125R and was converted to cradle a 2000 XR250 engine. In true BBR fashion, the bike is a finely crafted machine. The engine is pumped up to 300cc via legendary four-stroke engine builders Powroll. According to BBR, the bike is easy to ride and rips on trails and tight woods. They're also working on a Yamaha '00 YZ125 with a TT-R225 engine. Keep an eye out for a complete test on one of BBR's machines in an upcoming issue of *Dirt Rider*. Contact BBR at 253/631-8233 or visit www.bbrmotorsports.com.

- If you ever wanted to know everything about Penton motorcycles and the legacy behind John Penton, check out the book *John Penton and the Off-Road Motorcycle Revolution*. Call 440/988-4474, or write to the Penton Owner's Group at P.O. Box 756, Amherst, OH 44001.
- Did anyone know that YahooSports.com is a sponsor of supercross?

- Motocross legend Bob Hannah will be inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame in Detroit, Michigan in June.
- David Vuillemin is in the driver's seat to win the Vans Triple Crown of Supercross if he wins supercross rounds in Minneapolis and Vegas. A cool \$500,000 is what's at stake if the Frenchman can pull it off.

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Honda is about to change the way America works. Introducing the new Honda Rancher.[™] This powerful workhorse has all the reliability and dependability you've come to expect from a Honda ATV. It features Honda's exclusive in-line engine configuration, a simple and efficient design that has been proven in trucks and tractors for decades. And since everyone's job is unique, we offer four different Rancher models. You have your choice of two-wheel or four-wheel drive and Honda's innovative Electric Shift Program[™] (ESP[™]) or conventional foot-shift transmission. So if you've got a job to do—and who doesn't—head down to your local Honda Dealer and put the Rancher to work on your piece of the planet.

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Be A Responsible Rider. ATVs can be hazardous to operate. For your safety, read your owner's manual. Always wear a helmet, eye protection and protective clothing. Never ride under the influence of drugs or alcohol, never ride on paved surfaces or public roads, and never carry passengers on your ATV. Never engage in stunt riding or ride at excessive speeds. Be careful on difficult terrain. The Ranchers are recommended only for riders 16 years of age and older. Honda recommends that all riders take a rider training course. New ATV buyers should take advantage of free ASI training and completion incentives. For safety or training information, ask your Honda Dealer or call the ASI at 800-887-2887. When riding any vehicle designed for off-road use, remember to respect the environment. For a free ATV safety information kit, call 800-905-5565.

www.honda.com Specifications and availability subject to change without notice. For a free brochure, please see your Honda Dealer or write: American Honda, P.O. Box 3976, Gardena, CA 90247. Rancher, Electric Shift Program, ESP and Best on Earth are trademarks of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. ©2000 American Honda Motor Co., Inc. (2/00)

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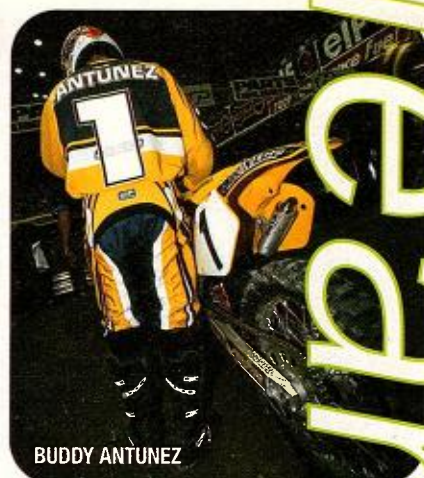
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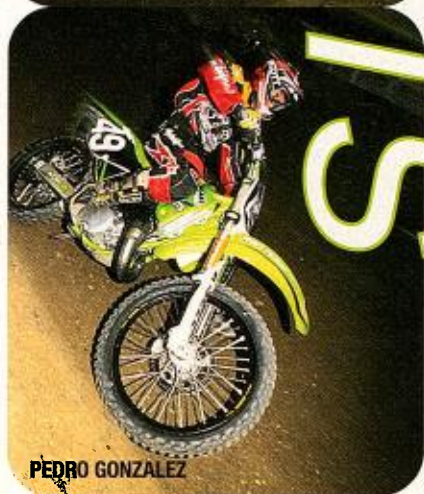
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BUDDY ANTUNEZ



DENNY STEPHENSON



PEDRO GONZALEZ

PHOTOS: SCOTT HOFFMAN

Team of the Year

ARENACROSS UPDATE: ANTUNEZ DOIN' IT AGAIN

Midway through the series, Buddy "The Budd Man" Antunez has stormed his way back to the upper rung in Pace Motor Sports arenacross series. It's no surprise to see the multitime champion leading. Although his opposition has displayed flurries of grandeur—Antunez forges on.

POINTS RACE

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. Buddy Antunez | 597 |
| 2. Denny Stephenson | 571 |
| 3. Pedro Gonzalez | 514 |
| 4. Jeff Willoughby | 348 |
| 5. Jeromy Buehl | 331 |
| Round 18 of 34 | |



Speed is where it's at, and for 2000 we're making going faster that much easier. We've completely redesigned our XCR line to offer more comfort, less restriction, and unmatched durability. If going fast is your idea of fun, then step up to XCR from Moose. It'll make going faster a whole lot easier.

GOING FASTER JUST GOT EASIER

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Mike Lafferty

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1997 AMA Enduro Champion

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- Team KTM...
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Nick Pearson, Russell Pearson,
Guy Cooper and Joe Kopp.
- KTM Junior
Supercross Challenge

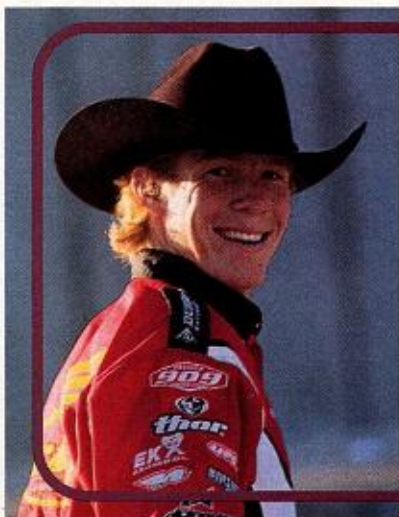
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Tea Offs



WANNA BE A COWBOY: Casey "The Cowboy" Lytle had a bet with his mechanic—Win a race or you have to wear cow-patty-kicking clothing until you do. Lytle was robbed of his first victory but came back in Houston, Texas, of all places, to win the right to remove his 10-gallon hat.

SCOTT HOFFMAN

NO EXERCISE VIDEO REQUIRED

No—Honda's Sébastien Tortelli is not doing a promo for the next Richard Simmons video. Many of the top riders are taking training more seriously than ever and the stationary bike is part of their regimen. Warming up before practice or a race is highly regarded as a way to avoid strained muscles and arm-pump and generally gets a rider's body up to peak operating temperature before they hit the track full bore.

GARTH MILAN



COUNTDOWN

MOTOCROSS

AMA/PACE SUPERCROSS SERIES

Pontiac, MIApril 1
Irving, TXApril 8
New Orleans, LAApril 15
Joliet, ILApril 29
Las Vegas, NVMay 6
www.pacesupercross.com

AMA 125/250CC MOTOCROSS NATIONALS

San Bernardino, CAMay 14
Sacramento, CAMay 21
Mt. Morris, PAMay 28
Southwick, MAJune 11
Budds Creek, MDJune 18
Buchanan, MIJuly 2
New Berlin, NYJuly 16
Troy, OHJuly 23
Washougal, WAJuly 30
Millville, MNAug. 13
Binghamton, NYAug. 27
Delmont, PASept. 3
www.ama-cycle.com

EMAP USA/NBC SPORTS GRAVITY GAMES

Providence, RIJuly 22-30
www.gravitygames.com

MOTOCROSS DES NATIONS

St Jean D'Angely, France ...Sept. 10

OFF-ROAD

AMA NATIONAL ENDURO SERIES

Belleplaine, NJApril 9
Calgary, TXMay 21
McArthur, OHMay 27-28
Idaho City, IDJune 3-4
Wellston, OHJune 11
West Greenwich, RIJune 25
Munster, TXJuly 8-9
Wolverine, MISept. 17
www.ama-cycle.com

AMA NATIONAL HARE SCRAMBLES SERIES

Hurricane Mills, TNApril 16
Good Springs, PAMay 7
Kahako, MOJuly 16
www.ama-cycle.com

AMA NATIONAL HARE & HOUND SERIES

Murphy, IDApril 2
Delta, UTApril 15
Lucerne Valley, CAApril 30
Jericho UTMay 13

GNCC SERIES

Morganton, NCApril 1-2
Hurricane Mills, TNApril 15-16
Sparta, KYApril 29-30
Clarksburg, WVMay 13-14
Boyer, PAJune 3-4
Brownsville, PAJune 17-18



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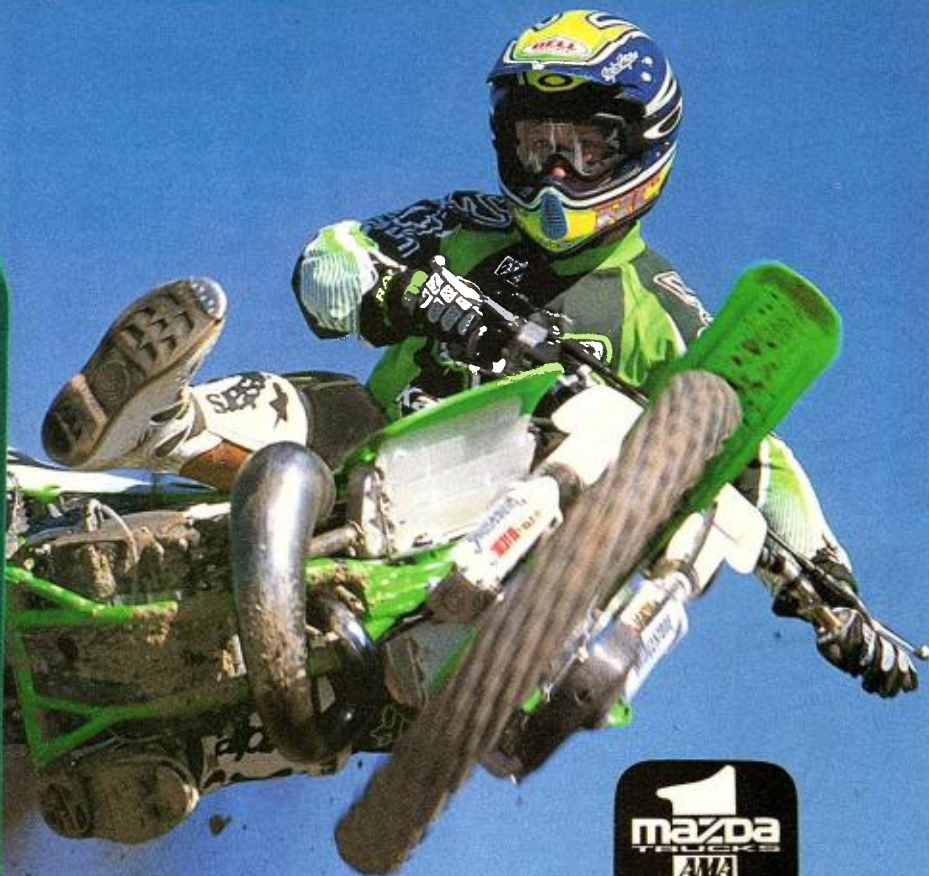
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Pro Circuit: Pro Circuit has been the leader in motorcycle performance for over 25 years! Pro Circuit has been the leading force in off road racing since the inception of the Pro Circuit/SplitFire team in 1991! Pro Circuit wins 11 AMA title championships in 9 years making it the most successful racing team in the history of motocross.

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Now, just in time for the millennium, Castrol introduces their all new Castrol TTS premix oil. TTS has been specifically designed to withstand the rigors of motocross and off road racing. TTS synthetic offers you maximum protection under extreme racing conditions.

Castrol racing fluids works so well that they have been chosen by Team Pro Circuit SplitFire Kawasaki and Factory Kawasaki as the oil of choice to start the next thousand years! Don't get left in the dust, call your local dealer today and ask about the Castrol line of off road racing fluids.



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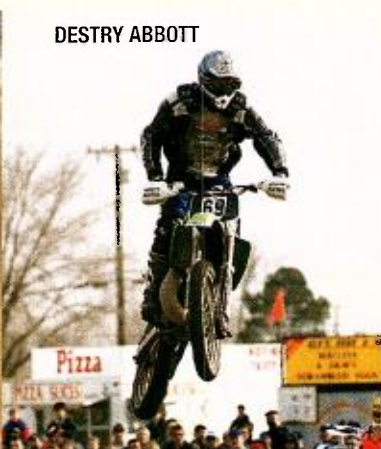


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JOHNNY CAMPBELL



DESTRY ABBOTT



ADELANTO GP GOES TO JOHNNY CAMPBELL
Mix a long, fast and rough course with the all-new Honda XR650R and a speedy dude named Johnny Campbell, and you have a winning combination for the annual Adelanto GP. JC nailed down victories in the pro, four-stroke and the Open classes. JC's XR650R was reportedly radared at 103 mph while Ty Davis' YZ426 clocked only 88! Kawasaki's Destry Abbott captured two class wins—unclassified and 125cc. Former Adelanto hotshoe Ty Davis was shut down with only the 250cc win. Super-fast old guy Larry Roelsler logged in the senior class win while Scott Myers took the Vet class.



SURPLUS Y2K MILITIA VEHICLE?



YEAR 2005 PROTOTYPE OR JUST SOME NUT?

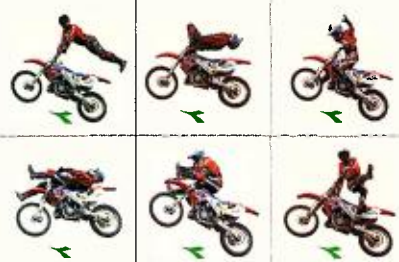
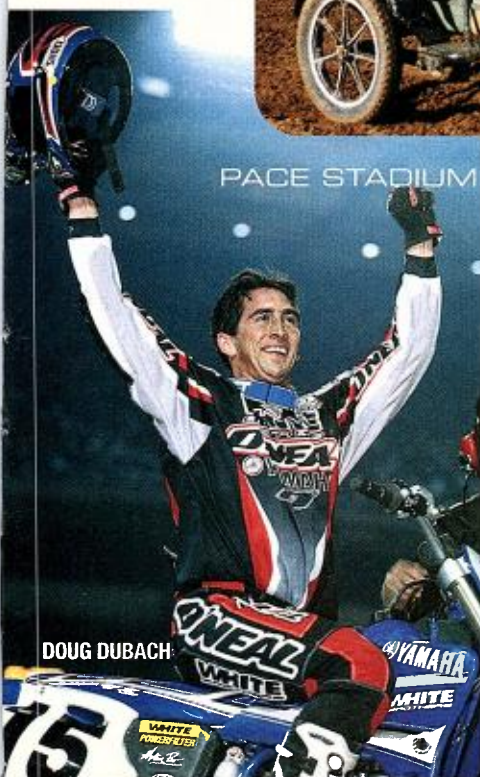
PACE STADIUM THUNDER BIKE SERIES

Doug Dubach thumped his way past two-time Stadium Thunder Bike champion Spud Walters to take the championship. The series that once held a full schedule was slashed to three races this year due to scheduling and stadium availability. Despite the short West Coast run, the combined event that featured buggy, motorcycles, quads, ultralights and trucks was well received. The fate of the series is undecided for 2001.

FINAL POINTS

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| 1. Doug Dubach | 360 |
| 2. Spud Walters | 350 |
| 3. Dave Shade | 340 |
| 4. Scott Myers | 336 |
| 5. John Beal | 303 |

DOUG DUBACH

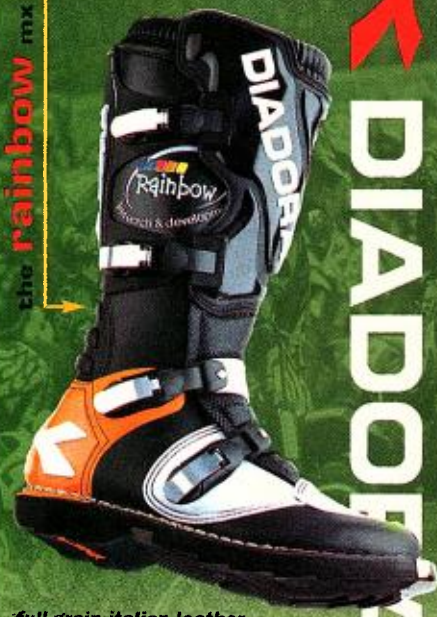


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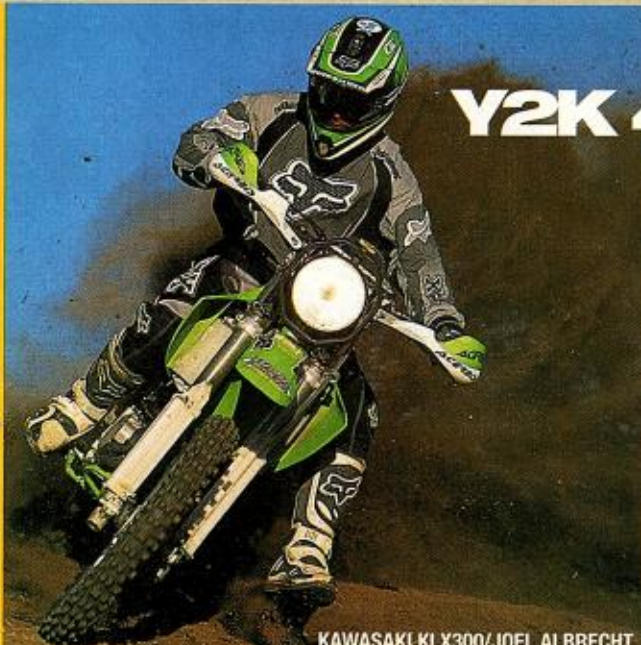


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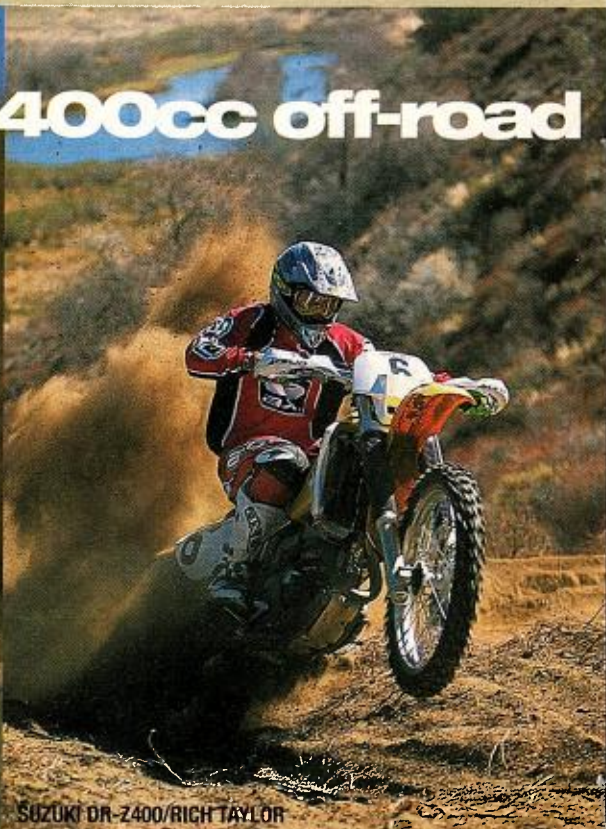
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SUZUKI DR-Z400/RICH TAYLOR



HONDA XR400R/JONAH STREET



VOR 400 ENDURO/GARY JONES



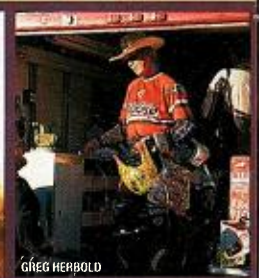
20-HOUR 2000 FROM AIR BRILES



GREG ALBERT AND BRANDON BALL



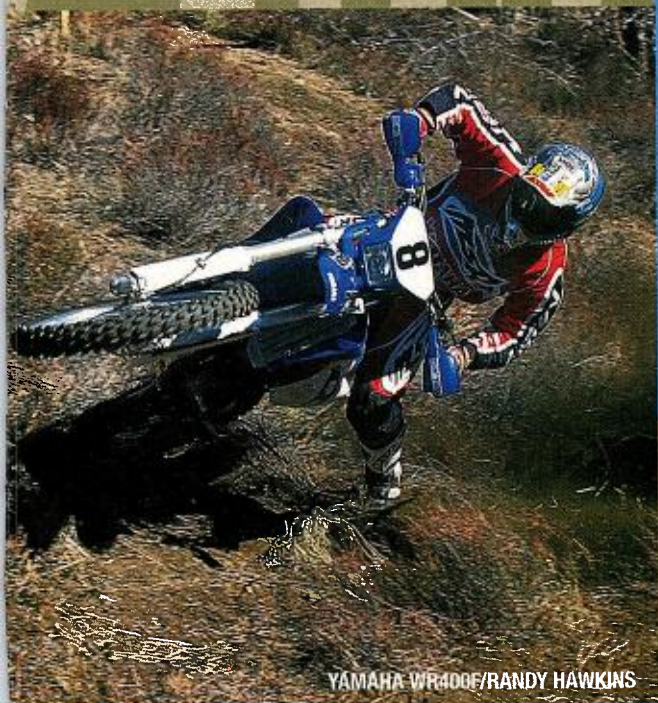
DOUG BLACKWELL



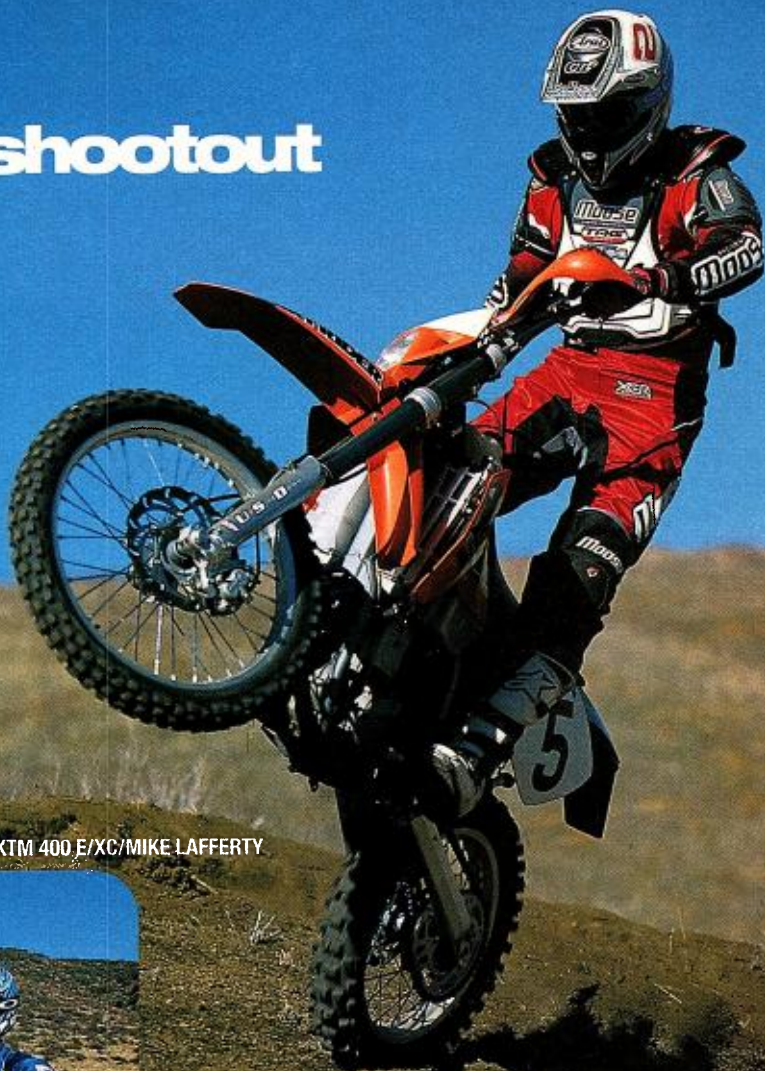
GREG HERBOLD

24HR

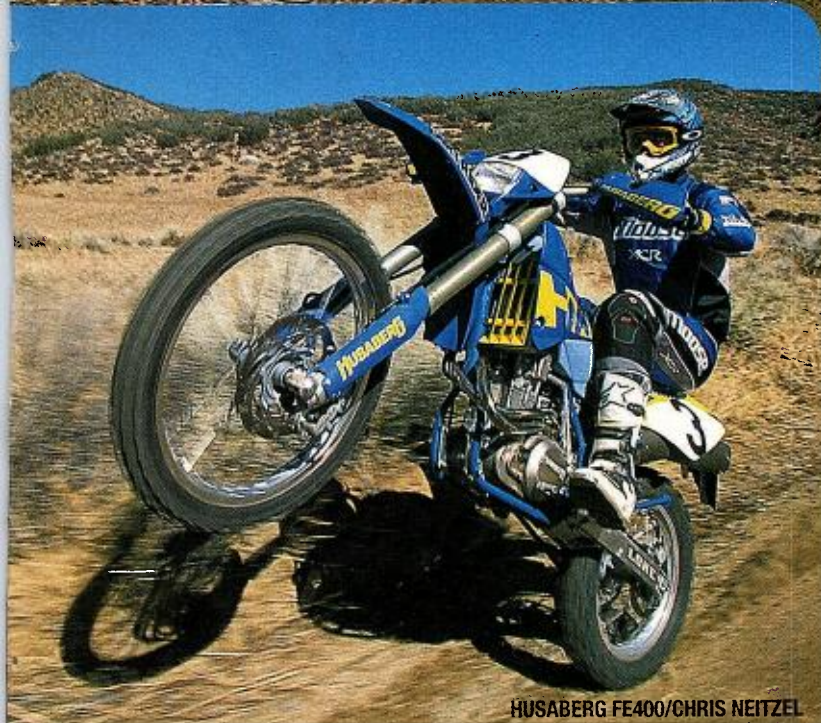
shootout



YAMAHA WR400F/RANDY HAWKINS



KTM 400 E/XC/MIKE LAFFERTY



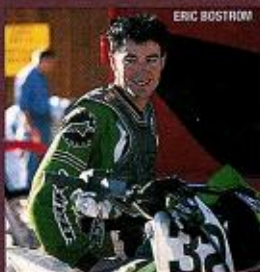
HUSABERG FE400/CHRIS NEITZEL

Who burns and who's burnt on the midsize four-stroke hot seat

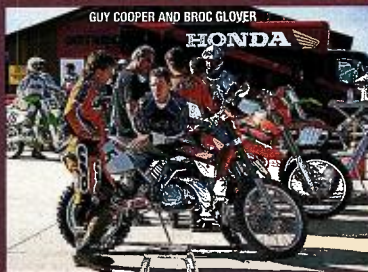
Think things are hot enough in the midsize, off-road four-stroke class? For our annual 24-Hour Off-Road Endurance Test we gathered seven intriguing middleweight four-strokes, and four of those seven are brand-new or radically revised state-of-the-art models. Judging from the ear-bending our editors are getting from the dirt riding public, inquiring minds want to know which bikes rule and which ones drool! The center of the firestorm of questions is the new KTM 400 E/XC. Is it as good as it



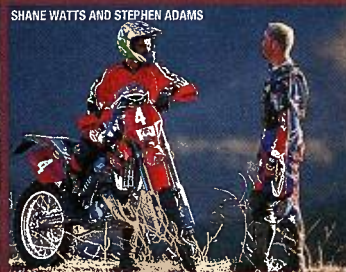
KELLY VANZANDT AND JEFF SMITH



ERIC BOSTROM



GUY COOPER AND BROC GLOVER



SHANE WATTS AND STEPHEN ADAMS

looks? Speaking of looks, is that Husaberg from Sweden or from Roswell? What the heck is VOR, and did you see that swingarm? With Euro-exotica grabbing all the available retinas, that new DR-Z400 could get ignored. Don't make that mistake. The DR-Z is no rewarmed DR350. It's a whole new dish that could give the Euros major indigestion. Remember that the three-year-old Yamaha WR400F still has a valve up on all the new bikes, and it still has the power to squish the liquid out of your adrenal gland. Think you should count out the XR400R? We can't count the graves of bikes that underestimated the XR line. Even giving away 100cc, Kawasaki's KLX300 can eat its slice of the off-road pie.

And the Cannondale! Everybody wants to know about the Cannondale. And it, well, how about those Dodgers?

Dirt Rider originally began 24-hour tests as a perfect format for flogging four-strokes, and at first tested only Honda XR models. The 24-hour concept has expanded to multiple bikes and even two-strokes, but the original theory still holds. A nonstop 24-hour ride is a great way to test a four-stroke. Modern four-stroke fans insist on

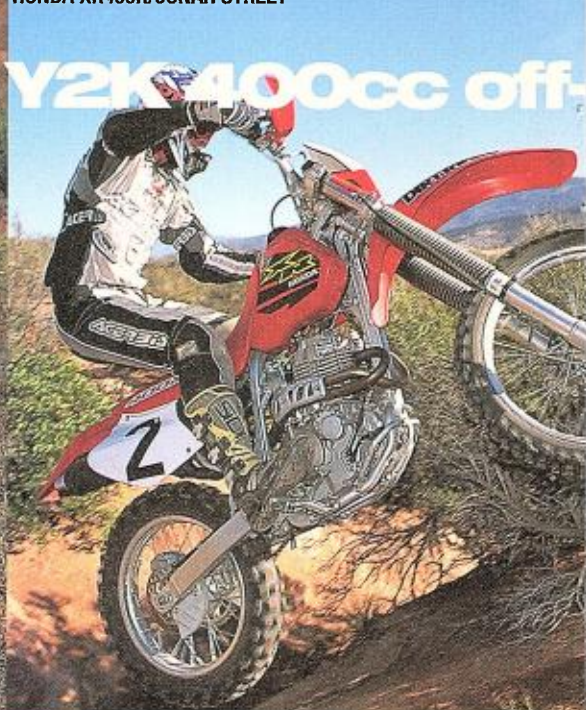
performance, but reliability and longevity are still a strong part of the purchasing decision. Our 2000 course definitely tested performance, and the day-and-night, minimal-maintenance format is a perfect yardstick for reliability and longevity. With all the totally new midsize four-strokes, and the total volume of models in the class, we've never had such a compelling justification for a 24-hour shootout!

Testing every possible 400cc four-stroke available for 24 hours was beyond our sanity threshold, so we reluctantly limited each manufacturer to one model. Thus we had seven live players, and we needed parameters. Since so many of the models were

SUZUKI DR-Z400/KEN FAUGHT



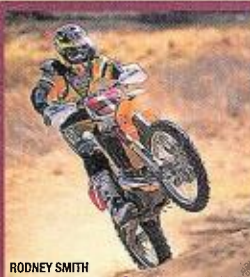
HONDA XR400R/JONAH STREET



HUSABERG FE400/CHRIS NEITZEL



YAMAHA WR400F/KEN FAUGHT



RODNEY SMITH



JEAN SUZUKI



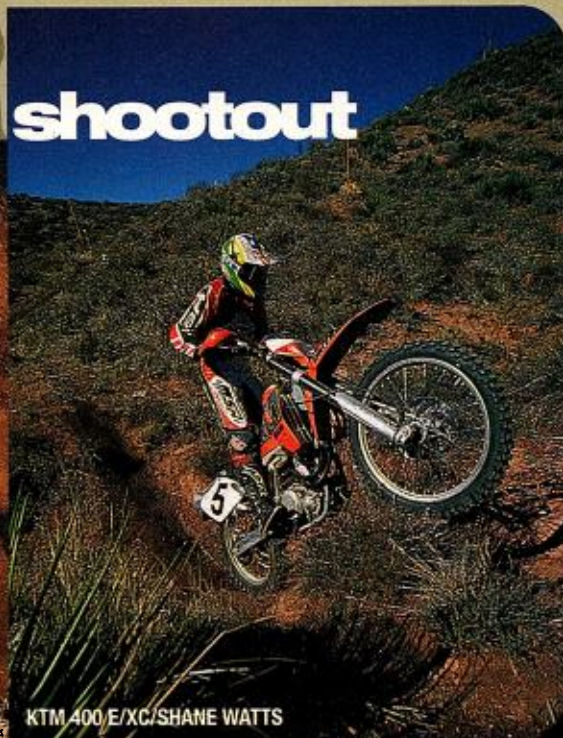
road

24HR

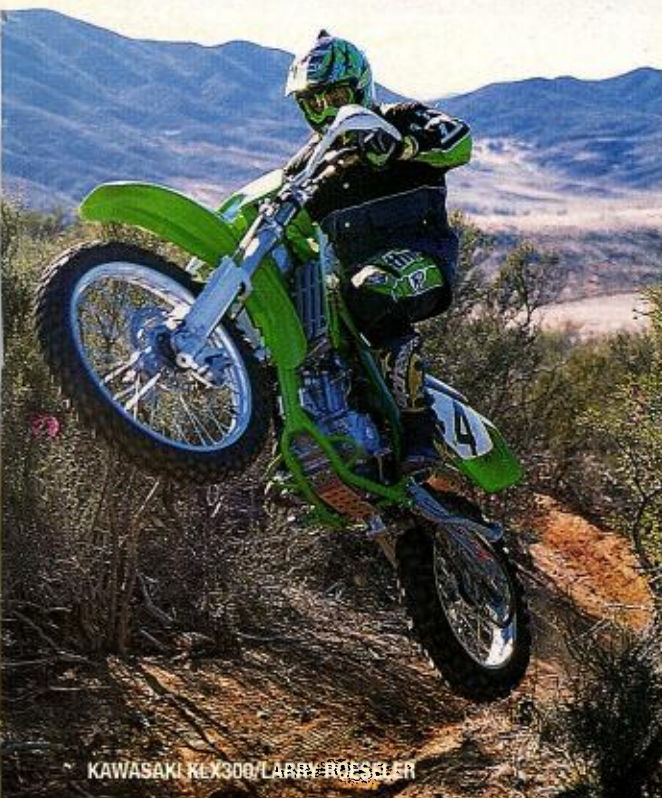
shootout



YOH 400 ENDURO/KAREL KRAMER



KTM 400 E/XC/SHANE WATTS



KAWASAKI KX300/LARRY ROESLER

brand new, we decided on a box-stock test. Each bike was allowed hand guards, since the course has some definite digit-damaging trails. Each bike had to start wearing the standard tires, but the OEMs could change them later if they preferred. The EPA-certified trail-bikes were allowed closed-course modifications to put them on a footing with the competition models.

A great number of trail sections were added to the course layout for 2000, and many of the trails were quite tight. Some were slick and off-camber, and all got choppy—like a real off-road racecourse. The end result was that only national-caliber riders could maintain a 24-mph average or better. Bruce Ogilvie, Guy Cooper and Chuck Sun hooked up with KTM's Revelle Harrison for a mock one-lap play-race with an average slightly over 26 mph, and that was early when the course provided perfect traction. Each lap also offered fire roads that allowed the brave (or stupid) to get the faster bikes up over 90 mph. In other words, a good test loop for off-road machines.

We selected five testers who would ride every bike and submit opinions, and after they were on the schedule, we filled in the rest of the available hours of riding for other riders. From midnight until six a.m., the determined and somewhat demented desert denizen Conga Line took over to keep the bikes moving all night while the day shift slept. They also submitted comments.

Our five testers were *Dirt Rider* feature editor Karel Kramer, former GNCC Vet A (the second fastest GNCC class) champ Tom Carson, off-road legend Malcolm Smith, Costa Rica's ISDE star (and sometimes only team member) Larry Larrabure and *Dirt Rider* test rider Ed Tripp.

How much can you learn in a day? It depends on how much of



SHANE WATTS



MALCOLM SMITH AND BRUCE OGILVIE

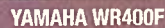
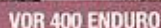
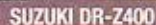
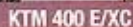
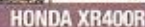


TOP OF THE RANCH



RIDERS' MEETING

Cannondale, Gas Gas and TM all claim they will have production 400s in 2000, but they couldn't make our spring test date. Husqvarna and ATK didn't feel they had the staff to undertake an out-of-state test of this magnitude, so they passed.



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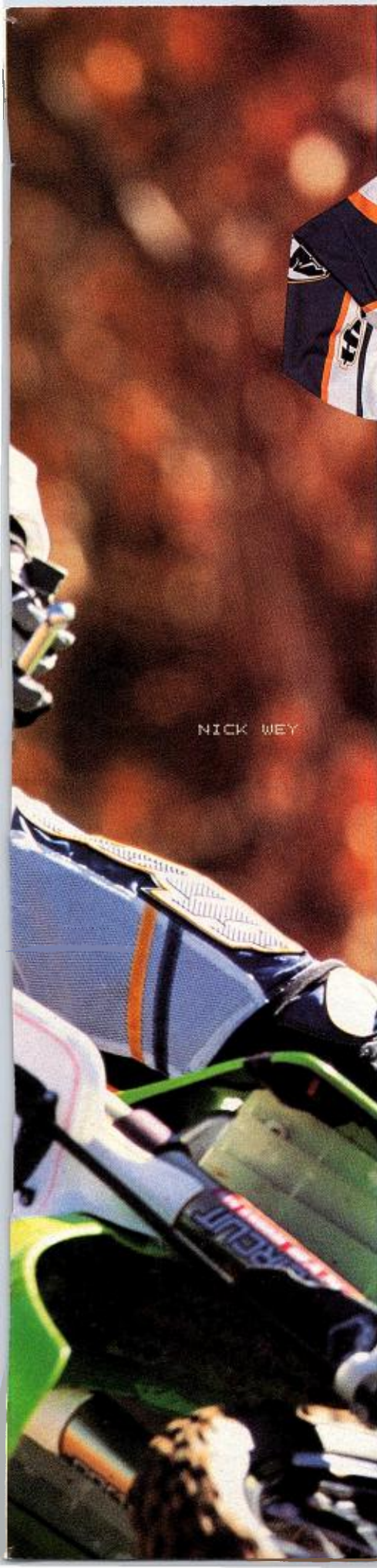
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BLUE

NAVY

ALLOY

[VENTED CORE PANTS | 28-30-32-34-36-38 | BLUE NAVY ALLOY | \$139.95]



BLUE

RED

ALLOY

[AC VENTED JERSEY | M - L - XL - XXL | NAVY BLUE RED ALLOY | \$49.95]

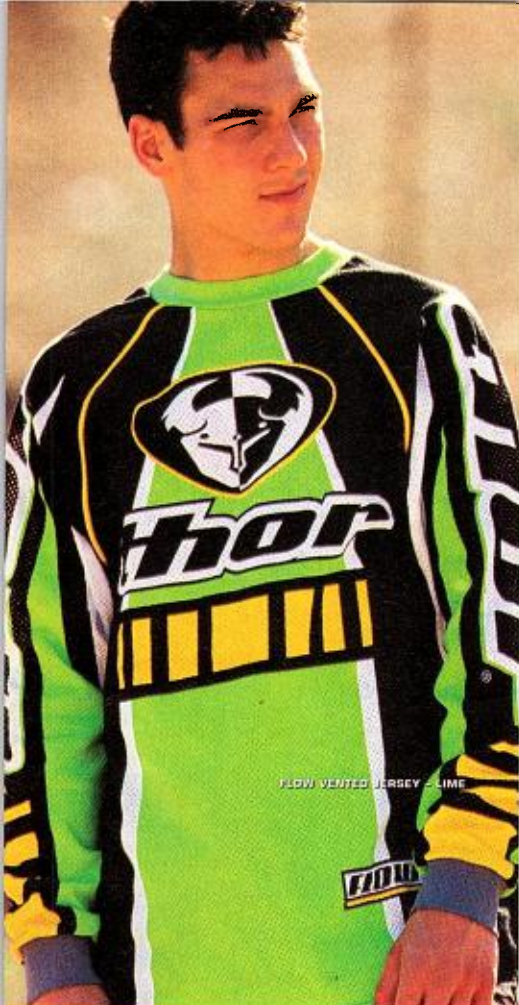


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thor



FLOW VENTED JERSEY - LIME



BLUE



ALLOY



YELLOW



RED

[FLOW VENTED JERSEY | S - M - L - XL - XXL | LIME BLUE ALLOY YELLOW RED | \$29.95]

Constructed of the finest 100% cotton all natural fibers, the Flow Vented jersey offers the traditional feel of a cotton jersey, in a pattern that's cut for today's rider. The perforated cotton helps keep you cool while the knit cuffs and collar keep roost out and soak up sweat. The perfect combination when you're looking for performance and style at an incredible price.



YELLOW



ALLOY



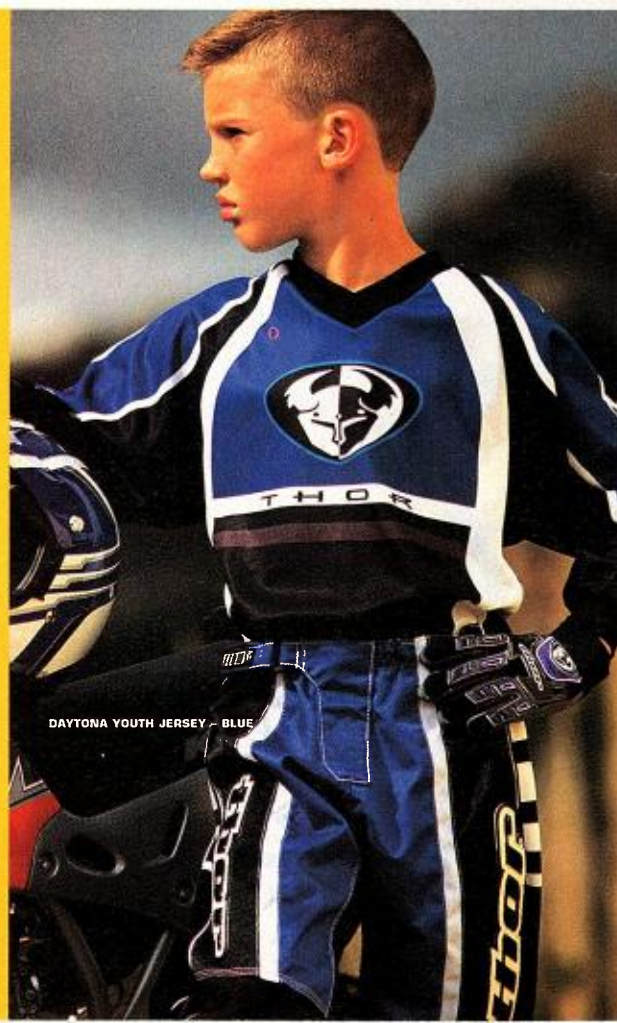
LIME



RED

[DAYTONA YOUTH JERSEY | XS - S - M - L | YELLOW ALLOY LIME RED BLUE | \$36.95]

Introducing the jersey that's as tough as the kid's that wear'em. The all new Daytona youth jersey features micro-mesh polyester construction and colorfast sublimation printing for a durable no shrink, no fade result. Add a pair of our rugged Flow pants, an SVX-Y helmet, and you're ready to roost.



DAYTONA YOUTH JERSEY - BLUE



[MESSENGER BAG | BLACK | \$19.95]



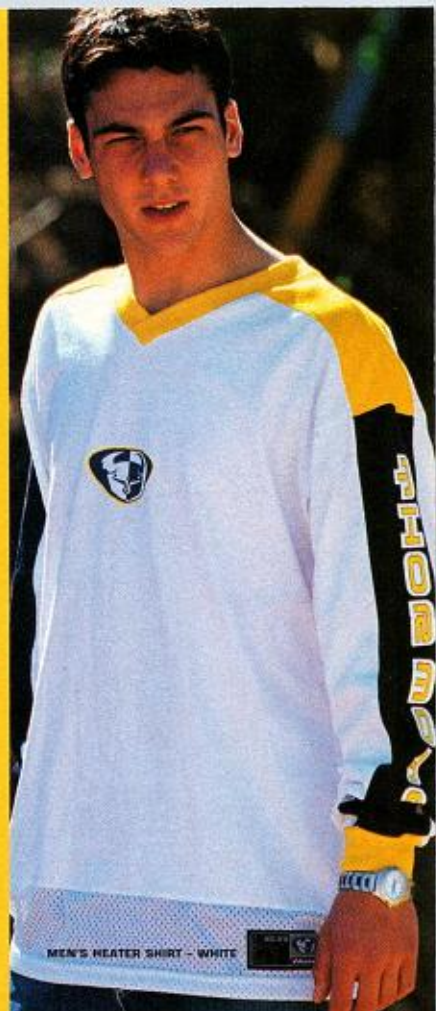
[MEN'S HEATER SHIRT | M-L-XL-XXL | WHITE BLACK | \$24.95]



[REV LIMITER WATCH | SILVER | \$59.95]



[WOMEN'S TEAM TOP | S-M-L | WHITE BLUE | \$27.95]

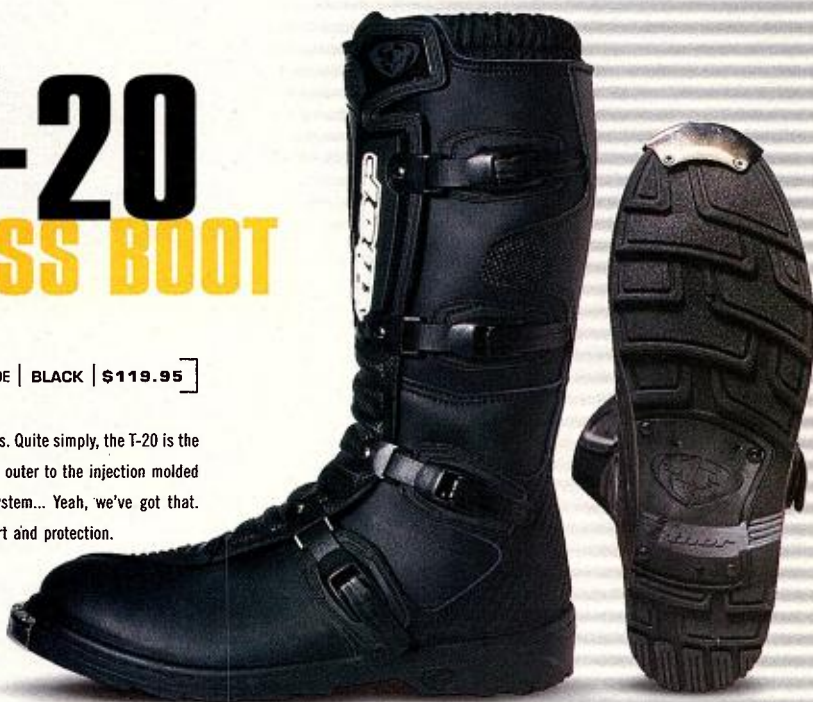


THOR T-20

MOTOCROSS BOOT

[T-20 BOOT | 6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13 | ITALIAN MADE | BLACK | \$119.95]

The all new T-20 doesn't just give you more. It gives you more for less. Quite simply, the T-20 is the finest entry-level boot we've ever offered. From the durable leather outer to the injection molded shin panel, we didn't cut any corners. Floating buckle closure system... Yeah, we've got that. And an integrated toe-shift medial side panel that provides support and protection. So, if you're looking for a boot with more, why not try one for less.



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thor

HONDA XR400R

Yamaha made such a huge splash with the YZ and WR400Fs that the waves have all but washed away the memory of the whole midsize four-stroke craze started by Honda and the XR400R. Before the XR400R, there were fast midsize four-strokes, but no fast, fun and torquey midsize thumpers and the 350 and 400cc strokers made power with rpm and produced little usable grunt down low. Many of the motors available were not in a compact and nimble chassis, as the XR is, nor were many affordable, civilized or reliable. The XR400R and the growing middleweight four-stroke market prompted our first large-scale 24-hour endurance test in 1996. Then as now, the XR was/is the only air-cooled bike in the comparison, yet it was praised for a sleek motocross-inspired feel, nimble handling and superior power. Changes to the XR have been few since 1996. The air-cooled, single-cam, four-valve engine offers slightly better performance and the suspension's internal settings have been revised. Since 1998 there have been only BNG changes.

In spite of the dearth of change, the XR still has nimble handling, excellent low-rpm performance and super-tractable power. The ergonomics and control feel are still right at the top of the class. In fact, Honda has a lock on seat-foam design. When the trail forces you to sit, there isn't a better place to be than atop the XR saddle. Most of the praise about the XR was directed at the comfort, ease of riding, reliability and the typically incredible Honda brakes. In 1996 we praised the performance, and only the Husaberg made appreciably more power, but at that time the long-term reliability of the Husaberg was questionable.

For 2000, the XR faces considerably more and younger competition. Compared to the new gen-

eration of four-strokes, the XR400R feels as if it has two-thirds of a powerband. The bottom and middle-rpm performance are comparable with any bike but where it runs out of breath, and the newer designs are just beginning to make serious power. It virtually redlines where the other bikes hit their powerband.

Much of the 24-Hour course at the Petersen Ranch was extremely tight and technical, and only national-level riders were able to average better than 24 mph—the average speed of most Eastern enduros. Riders less than superhuman were making the 16-mile loop in just under the allotted hour, but most had little time to dawdle. In those conditions the XR fared pretty well. The low center of gravity allows the XR to hide its full-tank weight of 278 pounds. Low-speed handling is quite good, and the bike is nimble. The trail contained many slippery cambers, allowing the XR to shine.

Whereas many of the XR's competitors now have electric starting, the XR doesn't really need it. The bike starts easily and reliably and isn't the least bit prone to stalling. As tester Trevor Vines noted, "The clutch works well, but most of the time you don't really even need it."

So where does the passage of time and increased competition leave the XR? There is no doubt that the

time has come for Honda to update the XR400R, and with the XR650R finished and on the market, no doubt an update is in the works. For now, though, the XR remains a viable choice. It's a mount that does the hard work for you. Perhaps tester Larry Larrabure's (an AA/ISDE rider from Costa Rica) comments best sum up the XR400R: "I ride this bike for a living—guiding tours in Costa Rica—and for a trailbike you can't beat its comfort, ease of starting and riding and reliability. I have raced the XR, too, and last year I won the Master A class and finished second overall against the two-strokes. The enduro was nasty, slippery and very technical. For me, this bike is at its best on easy fire roads or very difficult enduros." The XR is still a great trailbike that will last for many years of great riding with a minimum of expense. That's the perfect description of the bike many people need. Hopefully, they are smart enough to *want* the same.

SETUP

The Honda XR400R ran stock (gearing, handlebar, hand guards, tires, etc.) with closed-course modifications. The closed-

WHAT'S NEW

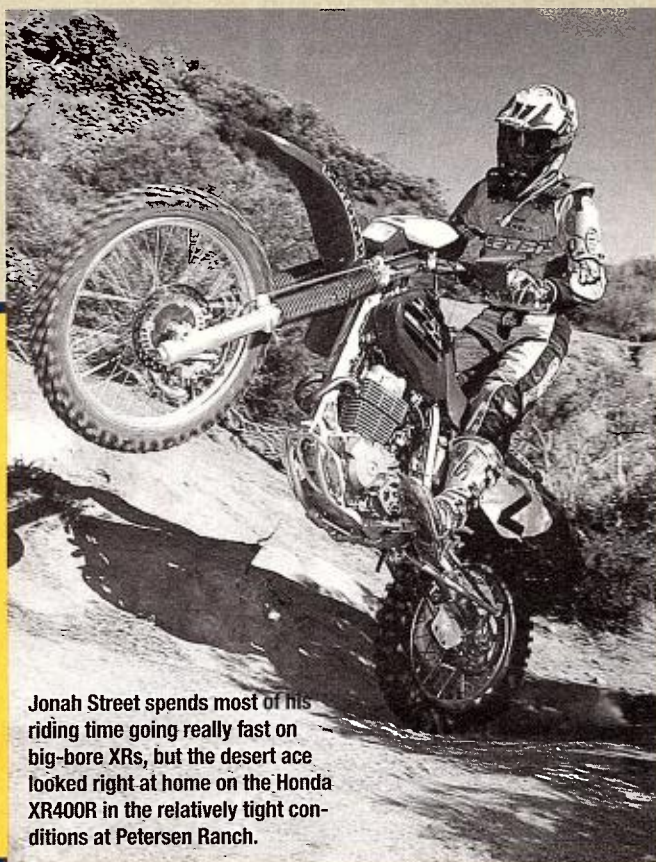
- New red body parts

WHAT'S HOT!

- Available and legal in all 50 states
- Enormous aftermarket support
- Decent performance in stock, near silent mode
- Best seat in the house
- Standard D695/K490 Dunlops are our favorites
- Fantastic history of reliability and quality
- \$5299 retail with six-month warranty
- Nimble handling and plush suspension
- No radiators or water pump to crash damage

WHAT'S NOT!

- Soft fork with the smallest tubes in the test
- High-rpm power is tame compared to newer engine designs
- Stock handlebar is low



Jonah Street spends most of his riding time going really fast on big-bore XRs, but the desert ace looked right at home on the Honda XR400R in the relatively tight conditions at Petersen Ranch.

MARK KARIYA

course mods include a '96 XR400R exhaust tip with the baffle and airbox snorkle removed, and the jetting richened up. The jets required are a 58 pilot, an A16A needle (part number 16012-NKK-000) with the clip in the middle, a 160 main jet and the airscrew set at 2 1/8 turns out. The air bleed is a 0.6x2x4. California models need the slide changed to a 408. The stock ignition has 60 watts of total output, but Baja Designs added another wire out of the stator with an additional 110 watts to run the large light. The electrical system and lights worked perfectly. At the end of the 24 hours, the XR felt and ran new.

Bob Rutten and XR Godfather Bruce Ogilvie have been riding partners for many years. Rutten normally rides the XR400R—even for motocross. He loves the new XR650R but believes that he will continue to ride the 400 as well as the larger, faster bike.



MARK KARIYA

Opinions

The XR400R wouldn't be my first choice as a race bike in the west, but I'd happily ride one anywhere. In the east, I'd be perfectly willing to race one as well. I'd stiffen the front end a bit, install a higher handlebar and go to it. The XR is a simple and reliable machine, and many times that is exactly what I am looking for. If a good deal came along, I would happily slide one of these into my garage. In an ideal world with an ideal bank account, the XR would be the second bike in that garage.

—Karel Kramer/6'1"/185 lb/B rider

The overall feel of the Honda was like every Honda that I have ridden: Good layout, comfy seating position and all the controls are in the right position and have a nice action. It's also very easy to start and there is no vibration. The suspension is soft and the power is very mellow. I was disappointed in the XR400R and

wouldn't really want to race one. But the XR is a good play bike, and I still wouldn't mind owning one.

—Tom Carson/
5'8"/170 lb/
1997 GNCC
Vet A champion

There is not much power compared to any of the other 400s, but the engine has smooth, usable delivery with almost no vibration. The clutch pull is nice and so is the transmission. It turns well and has plush suspension that feels best when riding slow, narrow trails.

—Larry Larrabure/5'10"/170 lb/AA rider

The XR is a bit underpowered compared to the Suzuki or Yamaha, but it always had enough power to get up the hills easily. The clutch worked well, but it wasn't even necessary to use it most of the time. The XR handled well, and the suspension is plush and the bike is fun to ride. As good as the XR is for trail riding or playing, I wouldn't want to race one.

—Trevor Vines/5'9"/155 lb/pro

When I sit on the XR400R, it doesn't feel quite right and I think that it won't work for me; but when I ride it, it works great. It's very plush; the engine really chugs well at low rpm and it's nimble. I could race it with no problem, and owning one would be easy. The bike wears well and features great craftsmanship.

—Ed Tripp/5'10"/175 lb/B rider

Conga Line Comments

Bruce Lockwood/6'1"/180 lb/B rider: When ridden within its limits, the XR400R is the perfect trailbike—comfortable, turns great, good balance and feels surprisingly light for its weight. But push it too fast for the suspension and it becomes a handful.

George LaMonte/5'8"/135 lb/B rider: Good ergonomics, no vibration, turns great, great brakes, nice shifting, but no top-end power.

John Bumgarner/6'1"/185 lb/A rider: Describe the XR400R? Can you say, "fun"? It's one of the best for the weekend warrior, but as a racer, it isn't in the same league as the other bikes.

Mark Getzfrid/6'6"/250 lb/A rider: The XR400R is a great play bike for smaller riders, and it is fun in the trees, but I'm six-foot-six so it feels cramped.

Glenn Sizemore/5'10"/190 lb/B rider: Great bottom and middle power. Starts easy, is quiet and has a smooth transmission. The seat is nice and soft and there is no vibration. Not an MX bike, but very good.

SO CAL MX TRAINING: CATERING TO THE STARS—AND THE REST OF US

So Cal MX Training has watched the *Dirt Rider* 24-Hour test grow markedly over the past four years of its involvement. "The first year there was, oh, 80 people there," So Cal's Mike Fedorow recalls. "I think we figured we fed about 350 this year."

Yes, that's fed, as in providing the food. You see, though Fedorow's So Cal MX Training is in business primarily to do what the name says—provide motocross training in Southern California—the company also has a smaller catering division. Past clients have included Honda and KTM for functions such as press introductions.

For this year's 24-Hour, Fedorow and his crew (wife Mardi, son Ryan, assistant cook Mike Ponn and situation manager Mike Minor) showed up at the Petersen Ranch with 250 pounds of chicken asada (which they barbecued in four and a half hours), 26 cases of bottled wa-

ter, 20 cases of soda and "a God-awful amount of everything else," including breakfast and lunch fixings. No one went hungry.

While we haven't attended So Cal MX Training's riding sessions (which are based mostly at the practice track in Lake Elsinore, California, that's the bulk of its current income. In fact, Fedorow raced as a local pro motocrosser for eight years and says the business simply grew out of helping other riders get better one at a time. Currently, So Cal has 20 racers that it's actively assisting on an ongoing basis, including four pros. "The rest are intermediates to entry-level riders," Fedorow explains. "It's fun, every bit of it—even the entry-level [teaching] is fun."

For information, call So Cal at 909/244-9747. A Web site is in the works.

—Mark Kariya



DONNIE BALES

In the four years that So Cal has fed us, their business in the industry has changed. For one thing, they now feed big groups of riders as a sideline for bike introductions and the like. They do such a good job feeding our crew that word got around.

Even with the Petersen Ranch's giant barbecue, it takes four to five hours to cook 250 pounds of chicken asada!



MARK KARIYA

judgment Day

HUSABERG FE400

A Husaberg 400 was one of the bikes that faced off against the new Honda XR400R in our 1996 24-Hour test. That bike was raw-edged, raucous and amazingly fast. The engine had been taken apart to replace some preproduction parts with production parts, and a cam sprocket that hadn't been dosed with threadlock compound jumped ship and wasted the engine. For 2000 Husaberg has greatly refined ergonomics, a more balanced chassis, better

brakes, more and better performance and a far better reliability outlook. Since 1996, Husaberg has redesigned the rocker arms and tappets for better valve train reliability. It also switched to a digital "Dynamic Force Control" load-sensing ignition that improved throttle response and performance. In that time span, Husaberg switched from a WP 40mm inverted fork to a WP 50mm conventional fork, and then back to a WP 43mm inverted fork. The company was also sold to KTM, and is now rumored to be for sale yet again. What hasn't changed?

The Swedish company is still not

a slave to fashion or

convention. The air filter looks like a foam Twinkie mounted on the top of the frame backbone under the fuel tank. The radiator shrouds feature round holes that line up with blisters molded into the fuel cell. The rear fender and sidepanels are molded together into one large piece. The center of the bike looks like something is missing since there is no conventional airbox. The FE400 has no electric start, no counterbalancer and no excess fat. Even with a full tank of fuel the Husaberg weighs in at a feathery 248 pounds! That's 23 pounds lighter than the next lightest bike (Kawasaki's KLX300) in this test!

The no-frills nature of the 'Berg pays big dividends on the scale, but it pays a price in vibration. Otherwise the engine is a winner. The iffy

response of older models wasn't jetting. With small production numbers, Husabergs of the past used the same carburetor, CDI box and exhaust headers for all models regardless of displacement. For 2000, each displacement model gets its own carburetor, ignition brain and header-pipe diameter. The new headers seal to the head better, too. Those changes alone make the 400 a better machine. The 400's Del'Orto carb now responds perfectly. The 400 starts reliably and effortlessly for those accustomed to the left-side kickstart. Power is strong from just about idle, and the engine revs willingly to a shrill rpm ceiling. The power builds all the way. The performance is equal or at least close to the best mills in the class. A six-speed wide-ratio transmission was criticized for a gap between first and second cogs, but for the most part the trans has a gear for any occasion. You can idle through the nastiest terrain, yet few were brave enough to use all of sixth gear on the fast road sections. In the higher gears, the 'Berg sucks up fire roads like a shop vacuum eats pill bugs. The shifting is pretty good, and it should be improved since the shift forks now ride on bearings in the new shift drum. Still, some riders marked it notchy, but the clutch is as easy to pull as any we've ever tested though it will fade when abused.

Except for a level of vibration higher than any 400cc bike in the test (but perhaps the VOR), there are few flaws with the 'Berg's engine. It was a little reluctant to rev when brand new, but as the test progressed, the engine got stronger and stronger.

The unconventional chassis doesn't play quite so well. Although it is the best Husaberg chassis ever and feels much more rigid, without a boxed swingarm pivot area, there is still a slight feel of frame flex that the other bikes don't have. The rear of the bike feels a bit high, and the seat is somewhat minimalist in design. The reach from the seat to the footpegs is short as well. On the plus side, most riders thought the steering was accurate and precise. At the same time, the 'Berg is stable at speed. The front is a bit prone to headshake on choppy bumps, but that seems to be more of a suspension trait than a chassis fault.

The fork and shock have a firm feel that is on the harsh side of the performance spectrum. On braking bumps

WHAT'S NEW

- New, painted engine cases with provision for hydraulic clutch actuation
- All-new plastic with see-through fuel tank (that eliminates the fuel pump) and one-piece rear fender/side number plates
- New radiator shrouds and louvers decrease width and aid cooling
- Standard frame guards that double as a countershaft sprocket cover
- Stronger chassis design that's uses lighter, stronger, thinner chrome-moly tubes in a triangulated design with a welded-on subframe and wider footpegs
- WP 43mm inverted fork (and related triple clamps) plus revised settings in WP PDS shock
- Polished swingarm with fixed chain guide
- Hubs, discs and larger front axle shared with new KTM models
- Switch to Excel rims and 30 percent stronger stainless steel spokes
- New rear brake pedal that rides on bearings
- D.I.D X-ring chain used on all models
- Spark arrestor/silencer was new for '99, but it gets an additional mount and a new sealing system between the muffler and head pipes
- Head pipes have improved mating with the cylinder head, and for the first time each Husaberg model has its own head-pipe I.D.
- Stronger shift drum designed for bearings on the shift forks
- New die-cast engine sidecase is lighter and stronger
- Longer and lighter shift lever
- For the first time each model has an optimized black box rather than the same brain for all three engine sizes
- New ignition cover with O-ring seal
- Automatic decompression system augmented with manual lever on handlebar
- Cylinder head improved with new intake and exhaust tracts, modified cooling passages and higher-quality steel valve seats and conical valve springs.
- Retail now for \$7068

WHAT'S HOT!

- Excellent engine performance with torquey off-idle pull and monster high-rpm boost mated to a six-speed wide-ratio gearbox
- By far the lightest clutch pull in the test, good brakes and reasonable throttle effort
- Lightest bike in the test by more than 20 pounds!
- Easy starting and clean carburetion
- Much-improved ergonomics with flatter saddle and eased rider movement
- Reasonable compromise of exhaust sound level and performance
- Much more solid feel to the chassis and planted feel for front end
- Unique looks and styling with see-through tank to easily check fuel level
- Optional under-seat fuel tank to extend range
- Michelin tires wear like iron

WHAT'S NOT!

- Heavy vibration as only bike without counterbalance shaft
- Suspension action on the harsh side, so the rider feels a lot of the terrain
- Price more in line, but still a little higher than other, comparably equipped bikes
- Some riders felt the seat was too low, and others felt it sloped toward the tank too much
- Michels don't offer much traction in the dry

Are you a fan of minimalist motorcycles? The Husaberg is short on frill but long on performance and light on the scales. The feathery dirt-rocket weighed in 23 pounds lighter than the next closest bike.



GARTH MILAN

and sharp edges, the Husaberg transmits a lot of the trail back to the rider. It isn't terrible, but it isn't a KTM or DR-Z either.

Overall, the Husaberg is a huge improvement over past efforts. The \$7068 (plus \$240 for destination and setup charges) price tag is more in line than previous models as well. The cost of paring 20 pounds off any of the other bikes will easily eclipse the price difference. The Husaberg feels solid and very well-built for 2000, and offers many of the same performance and handling traits that made the KTM so popular with our test crew. Unlike the KTM, you can still buy a Husaberg in 2000 even if you didn't put a deposit down six months ago. The vibration and somewhat choppy suspension hold it back, but if you want the lightest possible four-stroke and great performance, then Sweden has a deal for you!

SETUP

The Husaberg ran totally stock. For 2000, the bikes come with hand guards, and the ignition puts out a claimed 130 watts. The factory sent the bike with a large headlight and a helmet light that ran from the ignition. The combination was stinkin' amazing at night.

Opinions

The last Husaberg 400 we tested for 24 hours had a mechanical failure. In contrast, the new FE400 not only felt strong and tight and lasted all 24 hours, it felt better at the end than it did at the beginning. The suspension grew plusher and the engine got faster, more responsive and smoother with miles and time. The 'Berg makes stronger bottom power than all except the VOR, but still revs hard and freely. The clutch effort and the bike itself are the lightest. The ergonomics of the new chassis are a huge improvement over 1999. The suspension is still not as plush as the KTM or the Suzuki, and the engine vibes are too intrusive. Otherwise, the Husaberg is really close to the KTM, and you

can actually buy a Husaberg this year.

—Karel Kramer

The Husaberg feels the lightest of all and the chassis is very slim, but I didn't like the way the seat made me slide up on the tank. The fork was harsh and seemed to dive, and the rear end didn't hook up well under acceleration. The engine has good throttle response, but it vibrates and has notchy shifting.

—Tom Carson

Of all the bikes I tested, the Husaberg FE400 was the most fun. It's light and easy to point where you want to go. It gives you confidence at racing speeds and doesn't get you as tired as the other bikes. It also has the best motor and suspension for my riding style. It has some vibration, but I am willing to have the vibes for the light weight and this kind of power delivery. It would be a dream for me to race this bike.

—Larry Larrabure

The Husaberg FE400 has a very strong engine and a chassis that is very stable at speed. It starts easily, is light and carries its

weight low. I'd like the power to be a little smoother and softer down low, and have a little less vibration from the engine. First gear is a little low with a big gap to second, too. The ergonomics are improved and I fit on the bike well, but the rear end still feels high like the older Husabergs. I'd like it in a long race, but not in tight woods.

—Malcolm Smith/5'11"/165 lb/Trail legend (his sheet read "Old Man")

Husaberg's FE400 does work great. The bike is light, fast, well set up and I could easily race it with a taller handlebar. The suspension was a little firm, so the bike tended to stand up in corners.

—Ed Tripp

Conga Line Comments

Bruce Lockwood: I own a Husaberg 501 FXE, and this Husaberg is years ahead of previous Swedish efforts. It felt 25 pounds lighter than the other bikes. It feels so light that it is a gas to ride. It felt the fastest of all the 400s, yet the power was smooth and seamless.

Keith Mertz/6'2"/195 lb/Expert play rider (God of Gravity is more like it.—Ed.): The Husaberg felt similar to the KTM, but there was more vibration. Too much vibration for such a small motor.

John Bumgarner: Real slim—moto-oriented. Works well when aggressive—makes the most horsepower of the 400s. Suspension needs to be reworked for off-road.

Tim Johnson/6'6"/195 lb/Off-road expert: Vibrates too much; seat is too thin, too harsh!

Mark Getzfrid: Good top-end boost, but the seat-to-footpeg relationship is too short.

Bryan Abe/6'/225 lb/Beginner: Has a big-bike feel—long and slow-turning. Suspension is not as forgiving as KTM's. There's good mid and top power—stalling not a problem.

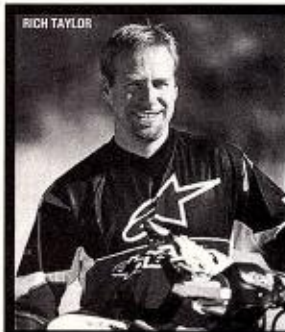
George LaMonte: Good mid and top power, starts easily and has great clutch feel.

Glenn Sizemore: Not as fast as the 600 Husaberg, but very fast! Harsh over bumps—same as the 600.

Eric Featherston/5'9"/180 lb/Intermediate play rider/Novice racer: Good power, excellent starting and handles like an MX bike, but the details need attention.

Tom Burgess/6'2"/210 lb/Old Intermediate: Really liked the long, strong power range. I adapted well to the bike.

IFACTI KTM rider Jack Penton won the 1978 Alligator Enduro.



RICH TAYLOR



STEVE HATCH



DALE BLUMHAGEN AND KAREL KRAMER

KAWASAKI KLX300

Kawasaki comes to this test carrying a knife to a gunfight. In 1999, we did a small shootout between the Honda XR250R, Kawasaki KLX300 and Yamaha TT-R250R. The extra 50cc (actually more like 32cc) made the KLX feel like a works bike in that company. If 32cc was that big an advantage in the shootout, imagine what a handicap of 120cc does for the little green bike in this test. Of course, we knew going in that the KLX didn't stand a chance against the full 400cc machines, so why did we include it? There are several reasons, but the biggest one is that the KLX is the best under-400cc four-stroke made. Also, the KLX gives short people a reason to live. It is a real off-road, race-capable machine with a decent seat height for shorter riders. The handling is second to none if you are the right size and weight for the suspension.

Attend any Eastern off-road event and you will see KLXs out there winning. Of course, if you are serious about a green off-road racer that makes beautiful noise, then there are hop-up options galore—not the least of which is the extreme but highly effective Stroker Speed Equipment 365cc kit.

The bottom line, though, is that we had to compare the KLX to other stock 400cc machines, since that is the class the bike must race in when there is a small-bore four-stroke class. ISDE events and qualifiers have a 250cc four-stroke class, but the KLX must convert to the older cylinder and piston to become small enough to compete in that class. So in spite of truly excellent handling, incredible steering and turning manners and the trailside manner of a tree surgeon, the KLX didn't find the going easy. The KLX is a willing starter, and the engine makes power over a long rpm range. There is virtually no vibration, and the gearbox ratios match the power quite well. The suspension is on the plush side but is also softly sprung and lightly damped. The ergonomics are compact and the seat height is low. If you are a light, small rider, those are all good things. But our test crew leaned more toward basketball and Weight Watchers. Two of the Conga Line riders were six and a half feet tall!

It does irk us that Kawasaki had the holeshot in this class—and the Stroker 365s show the potential and promise in this design—yet the green guys have done nothing with a fine motorcycle. A redesign based on the KLX could have made this a very different shootout. Still, if you are a short rider, you are probably breathing a sigh of relief that Kawasaki hasn't changed the bike, and you can still enjoy woods riding without elevator boots.

If Kawasaki wants to get serious about midsize four-strokes, though, the KLX engine will need to grow up and the suspension must get longer and stiffer with better bottoming resistance.

SETUP

As with the other 50-state bikes, we performed closed-course modifications on the Kawie. These amounted to removing the pencil-sized restrictor from the end of the muffler, taking the snorkle out of the top of the airbox and rejetting. Kawasaki also fitted Acerbis Rally Pro hand guards to protect fingers and investments in controls and handlebars.

WHAT'S NEW

- 2000 graphics

WHAT'S HOT!

- One of the best-turning, lightest-handling bikes ever made
- Super-plush suspension
- Easy-start engine that revs freely with zero vibration
- Very light feel and nimble handling
- Lowest seat height of all the bikes
- Ideal for small or light riders
- \$4699 retail is lowest in test

WHAT'S NOT!

- Gives up 100cc to the other bikes, so is down on power
- Low ground clearance makes the footpegs low in ruts
- Suspension bottoms easily when pushed

Semi-retired motocross star Joel Albrecht looked right at home on our off-road course, and he was up for a lap anytime there was a KLX available. Perhaps off-road has a convert?



GARTH MILAN

Opinions

I love the way the Kawasaki KLX300 handles, and I have talked a couple of friends into buying them. Those friends are inseam challenged, and for a short rider, there isn't a better four-stroke than the KLX. Whenever I attend GNCC events, I see the little Kawasakis running very strong in the four-stroke classes. In fact, when I raced the Loretta Lynn's round in the four-stroke C class, it was two KLX300s that beat me. The KLX has a place, but that place isn't going head-to-head with full 400cc machines and 185-pound riders aboard.

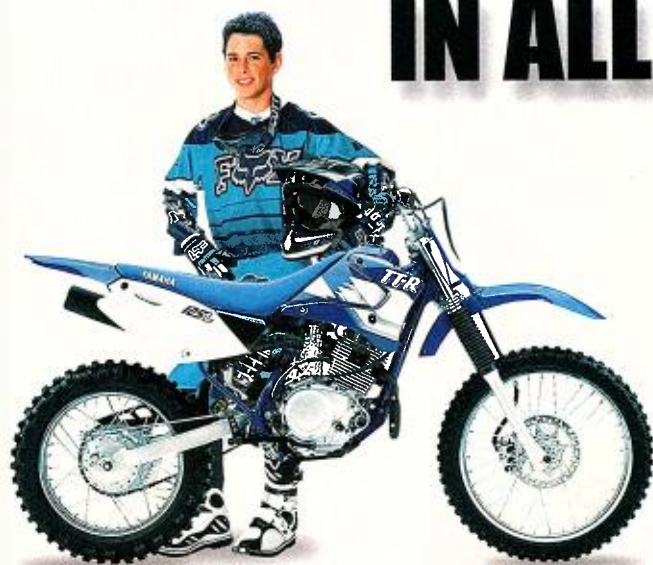
—Karel Kramer

Putting this bike in fourth place was a hard thing because it does everything well. It feels small, but it is so easy to ride. As long as you are in the right

LET'S FACE IT.



THERE'S A LITTLE SUPERHERO IN ALL OF US.



INTRODUCING YAMAHA'S TT-R FAMILY. FIVE GREAT TOOLS FOR PLAYING IN THE DIRT.

C'mon, admit it. You live for weekends. Time for playing in the dirt with Mom and Dad. And roosting your little brother when he tries to beat you back to camp. Maybe you even catch yourself dreaming of standing atop a podium one day, beaming ear-to-ear and hoisting your trophy high. Sort of like six-time 250 Supercross champ Jeremy McGrath. OK, so maybe you don't ride at quite the same level as Supermac, but then

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Frederic Bolley, 1999
250 World Champion.

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Opinions (continued)

gear, you can keep your momentum going. In the tight stuff, it is very easy to make time. I wouldn't want to race a stock KLX, but I would like to have one for a play bike.

—Tom Carson

The KLX feels light, turns well and is easy to pick lines on. The bike felt small, though, and it doesn't have enough power to compete with the 400s.

—Larry Larrabure

Women and shorter riders would probably like the KLX. For me, the grin factor was missing.

—Trevor Vines

I rated the bike a 9 for handling since it is very nimble and turns well. It feels light and is fun to ride. The suspension felt good, but

there isn't a lot of travel. The engine makes a good spread of power, and it is tractable and effective in the tight stuff. It's weak on the fast roads and big uphills, and the pegs drag in the rocks. I still think it would be OK in a long race because it is so light.

—Malcolm Smith

This bike does everything just about right as far as handling. It's nimble, stable at speed and turns great. Watch your toes, though. It is a little low. With more motor and stiffer suspension, it would be way better. I've raced one of Larry Roe-seler's Stroker KLX365s, so I know how good the bike can be.

—Ed Tripp

I would love the KLX as transport in rural areas. It is a great beginner

bike and a good dollar value. It does the job it was designed to do. More power and a hot-start button would make it more fun.

—Tony Makiouf/6'/190 lb/A rider

Conga Line Comments

Ray Gibbs: You have to be realistic about the power: 300cc isn't a lot to work with. Compared to other four-strokes of similar size, it does a very good job. The whole package felt like a 125cc machine compared to the other bikes.

Keith Mertz: The KLX would be an excellent first bike since it is fun to ride and handles well. I was afraid to let off the gas because it would take too long to get the rpm back up to where it was.

Tim Johnson: Too small for me.

Mark Getzfrid: Good, comfortable, well-mannered and forgiving. The fun factor was high, and it was good in the tight stuff.

Bryan Abe: I waited for midrange power that never came. It sounds fast but isn't.

Glenn Sizemore: Good shock, fork and clutch, and easy to ride, but I tended to overrev it looking for speed.

Eric Featherston: If President Clinton wanted a dirt bike, I would give him this one (complete with cigar)!

Tom Burgess: I adapted well to the KLX and still kicked butt on the larger bikes, but I would buy the KLX for my kids and get the VOR for me.

THANKS TO BAJA DESIGNS IT'S A BRIGHT NEW WORLD

There's no way around riding at night when you decide to run a bike for 24 consecutive hours, and the night sections have actually become some of the most coveted slots for *Dirt Rider's* 24-Hour test. The reason? Riding at night is not as frightening as it seems and is actually lots of fun, especially when you can run Baja-style lights.

Of course, none of our test bikes came with more than enduro-legal headlights. Those are adequate and would certainly have let us find our way around the course in the dark of a winter's night. However, there's no way you could've ridden safely at speed with stock lights, particularly on the fast fire road sections.

Thus, we once again called on the crew at Baja Designs to see if they could hook us up with the darkness erasers each machine needed. They could and did.

Baja Designs is probably best known for its dual-sport conversion kits that are the standards of the industry. There's more to Baja Designs than that, however. You see, Alan Roach of Baja Designs likes to ride, and in a dilemma similar to many of ours, there simply aren't enough hours in the days away from the office to ride dirt bikes. Thus, he began hopping up standard light setups—or putting one in place if none existed before—about the same time he started offering dual-sport kits in '92.

For this edition of the 24-Hour, Baja Designs brought 10 sets of lights with the goal of fitting each test bike with a nice, bright High Intensity Discharge (HID) bulb-equipped Oscar SC or Super Oscar—with patterns modified to suit the needs of a dirt bike—in the hour or so before dark. Roach believes Baja Designs is the leader in adapting HIDs to dirt bike applications, having worked with these unique lights since two weeks before the Baja 1000 in '98 when he worked out how to put one on his race bike. "When it comes to lighting, we're definitely the pros," he claims.

HIDs have several advantages over the previous standard quartz halogen lamps. In a nutshell, HIDs put out a brighter, bluish light, require less juice to do so and are smaller. Unfortunately, they're substantially more expensive. A complete single eight-inch light assembly costs \$384. Baja Designs needs \$355 on top of that for an HID setup (with ballast ignitor) and another \$84 for a DC power pack (that converts the alternating current most bikes put out to direct current; most battery-equipped bikes won't need it).

Both KTMs did not get the HIDs because their ignitions don't pump out enough watts so they ran 55-watt H-1 halogen bulbs. Also, the Husaberg factory sent a Bosch light for the FE400.

No one broke any of the lights, not even with the Conga Line crew hooking up and roosting each other throughout the night. Everyone found that the added brightness literally opened up a new dirt-riding world.

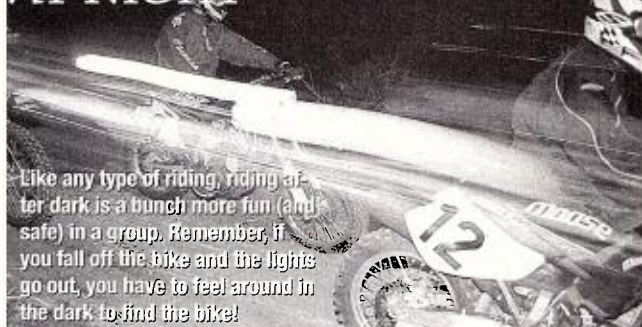
If you haven't tried riding at night, try it with good lights, and you'll be hooked. For more information on how to upgrade your current bike's lighting capacity, contact Baja Designs, 7558 Trade St., San Diego, CA 92121; 858/578-9111; www.bajadesigns.com.

—Mark Kariya



PHOTOS MARK KARIYA

AT NIGHT



Like any type of riding, riding after dark is a bunch more fun (and safe) in a group. Remember, if you fall off the bike and the lights go out, you have to feel around in the dark to find the bike!



We had 10 bikes running with both tests going on, so it is no small task or investment to have everyone lit up and enjoying the night.

Without Alan Roach and the crew from Baja Designs, it would be a whole lot less fun to do a 24-hour test. As anyone who has gone trailriding (unintentionally or not) after dark with a stock headlight will attest, it ain't a ton of fun. Riding with the incredible Baja Designs lights is two tons of fun! These babies dehydrate bushes that get too close to the trail.

Husaberg came prepared with a tape-on helmet light to augment the headlight. The 'Berg's ignition can handle the load. In the dust it was like driving a car in fog with the high beams on. Otherwise, the combination of light was a dream.



KTM 400 E/XC

Rarely has any off-road motorcycle been as eagerly awaited as the new KTM 400 (and 520) E/XC Racing Four-Stroke (RFS) models. For this level of anticipation to follow a European machine is virtually unheard of since the early '70s. Buyers have been ready for a serious race four-stroke, and KTM has delivered. How serious? Take a read of this sales bulletin KTM sent to its dealers:

"The following is information to help you determine if a customer who wants to buy or has put money down on a new KTM Racing Four-Stroke (RFS) is indeed qualified and will ultimately be a satisfied owner. This is no dual-purpose, play bike. It's built for the highest level of competition and is best matched with an owner who is

dedicated to maintaining and riding at the highest levels. The RFS was designed, developed and tested as a pro-level, strictly competition racing machine. The design and development focus was on high performance and light weight with few compromises made for convenience, comfort and versatility. The RFS is not a low-maintenance, high-comfort machine, nor was it intended to be. One misconception is that since the 400 and 520 E/XC RFS has electric start it could be transformed into a dual-purpose bike. This will prove to be aggravating for your customer and you. The RFS is vastly different than an LC4. In particular, to increase performance and

reduce weight, it has no mechanical ventilation (very important in stop-and-go riding/traffic). The clutch is undamped (therefore faster clutch wear), there are narrow fifth and sixth gears (not designed for permanent stress that occurs with pavement riding), the absolute minimum required engine oil capacity and no oil cooler or frame reservoir. If you hear anything that closely resembles dual-purpose, street, road, etc., in your discussion with a potential RFS purchase, do him a favor and steer him to an LC4."

WHAT'S NEW

- Completely new SOHC, four-valve engine with counterbalancer and (right side!) kickstarter and electric restarter with a starter motor that weighs less than a pound
- A Husaberg clutch with no outer clutch basket is used. The clutch gear makes up the outer basket, and very thin plates are used
- Two oil pumps and multiple oil filters and screens, but no separate oil reservoir
- All-new engine components including a forged piston and rocker arms, nitration-hardened valves, progressive-wound double valve springs, aluminum retainers and case-hardened valve adjusting screws
- 12mm narrower engine than KTM's 250cc two-stroke engine
- Keihin CR flat-slide carburetor (like '99 Yamaha YZ400F)
- 20mm front axle (up from 17mm)
- Movable handlebar clamps for variations in riding position
- The chassis shares mechanical features and geometry with the two-stroke KTM lineup including the WP suspension, linkless PDS, stronger swingarm than 1999 and the daisy-shaped brake discs
- The seat base and tank are different from the two-stroke line—all other plastic is shared
- Hydraulic clutch actuation is new to KTM four-strokes
- Domino tapered bar is standard
- Very thin fifth and sixth gear—designed for transport sections in enduros and not for extended high-load use to help keep engine narrow

Former GNCC regular Tom Carson was impressed with the power and the purpose-built, race-ready persona of the all-new KTM 400 E/XC. The bike is light, fast, refined and fully equipped. Just add gas and hand guards.



WHAT'S HOT!

- Lighter than all but two of the kickstart-only machines!
- Very slim and roomy chassis that makes it easy for rider to change positions
- Reversible handlebar clamps with two different mounting holes supplied in the standard top triple clamp
- Vibration is low for a serious race model, and performance is very high
- Very plush suspension—well-suited to off-road work, yet with plenty of adjustment if you want it
- Six-speed offers incredible versatility and extremely high top speed
- Chassis is feels stable yet steers fine with proper suspension setup
- Maintenance is easy with no-tools air filter and 45-second shock changes
- Bridgestone tire wore well and hooked up great on hard dirt and rocks
- 30-day warranty

WHAT'S NOT!

- At \$6698, the 400 E/XC is approximately \$1000 more than Japanese machines
- You probably can't get one if you want one. All models were sold out in advance
- Rear shock preload is critical to proper steering and tracking

While we agree that the KTM 400 E/XC is a high-performance racing machine intended for serious competition, the orange men didn't go as skimpy on the creature comforts as they make it sound. The engine is quite smooth thanks to the inclusion of a balance shaft, and if the electric start isn't a creature comfort, what is? KTM developed the E/XC in world enduro competition where the riders are on the bikes for two days. The ergonomics are well-suited to long and challenging events. The sidestand is light and effective, yet tucks up so high and tightly that it will never bother you on the trail. There is even a rubber loop to secure the stand in case it starts flopping.

At low rpm, the power of the 400 E/XC is softer than the Husaberg or the VOR, but it builds smoothly to a very healthy midrange, then on through to a velvet shriek of high-rpm acceleration. The bike rips, but it rips without wheel-spinning histrionics, abrupt hitches or jumps in the power-band. The 400 E/XC squirts from corner to corner or obstacle to obstacle with a minimum of fuss.

The chassis feels quite light, and it maneuvers effortlessly while the rider is standing. Get in real tight woods, though, and you will want to ensure that the shock preload is set correctly to allow the front end the best bite at the earth's surface. If the rear end sags under the cornering forces, the front end will push a bit. First gear is a little tall for serious tight sections with stock gearing, and the handlebar can get busy at speed on small, sharp, choppy bumps. But neither is anything to worry about, and these two complaints are all that we have with the KTM. It is a highly effective race bike that still takes

Mike Lafferty had planned to race a four-stroke at selected events in 2000, but with virtually every bike sold, he will most likely campaign the trusty two-stroke all year. He looked much happier on the new thumper than he did on the KTM 400 LC4 we last tested for 24 hours.



GARTH MILAN

Shane Watts is far more famous for his exploits on a KTM 125 E/XC, but top off-road racers in Australia must do a little of everything. Watts has four-stroke experience in his home country's four-stroke MX series.

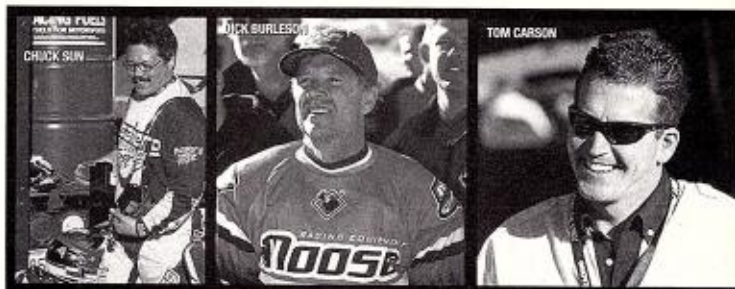


IFACT1 In 1971 Daytona Beach's annual Alligator Enduro was still a National event.

the time to care for the rider.

While not the easiest to pull, the KTM hydraulically actuated clutch has a relatively light pull, has an unchanging engagement point and works very well. Braking is very good, and the added rotating mass of the four-stroke makes the rear brake less prone to locking than KTM's two-stroke line. Unlike other European four-stroke efforts, the KTM 400 has neither a towering seat height, nor rough edges. We wouldn't like riding it very far on the pavement, but in the dirt it is comfortable and requires little energy to get the job done.

Remember that this bike was already a world enduro champ before there were even any production models. And the rider, Italy's Giovanni Sala, had never raced a four-stroke before. We rode his actual race bike, and if anything, the production bike is



SUZUKI DR-Z400

Suzuki chose to bring its kickstart-only DR-Z400 to compete in the 24-Hour midsize four-stroke shootout. That seemed a good choice to us. As it turned out, the DR-Z is effortless to start, and at 281 pounds full of fuel and ready to ride, the kickstart model is the heaviest of all the 400cc class machines we tested (though an electric-start Husaberg would weigh four pounds more). The difference is small—10 pounds or less in all cases except the Husaberg, which is a very noticeable 33 pounds lighter! Of course, the DR-Z costs nearly \$2000 less than the 'Berg.

First impressions of the DR-Z are invariably good ones. The seat has ample, plush foam to support the rider, and the rest of the bike is slim and unobtrusive. The sidepanels are quite large, and it's obvious that Suzuki didn't want the rider to be snagging anywhere on the bike. The attention to detail worked. The stock bar is a little low and far back on the top triple clamp for taller riders, but otherwise the comfort of the Suzuki is top-notch. As we mentioned, the engine fires easily; and once running, the carburetion is excellent and the vibration is nil. Normally any Suzuki off-road clutch is the epitome of ease, but in this group the DR-Z clutch pull is average. The engagement is smooth, though, and the shifting is very smooth for a four-stroke. It is possible to miss shifts, though. Low-rpm power delivery is on the soft side, and that may seem strange to the motocross-bred, but for off-roaders the soft delivery promises good hookup in slippery terrain. As the rpm rise, so does the pony count. At high rpm the DR-Z is truly strong and makes very good power.

With the Suzuki we had the opportunity to ride with a stock U.S. pipe, the Euro pipe and a Yoshimura header and muffler combination. Our conclusion was that the Suzuki responds very well to exhaust tuning. The bike with the aftermarket exhaust was the power equal of any bike in the test. No doubt there is a way to modify the stock pipe for closed-course racing, but it will involve cutting on the internal baffles. The end cap contains the spark arrestor (a

better. It is certainly more civilized and better balanced from front to rear.

Unfortunately, production numbers for 2000 will be far below demand, so finding a 400 E/XC for sale will be a challenge. If you are one of the lucky ones who put down a deposit early—or have been detailing your KTM shop owner's car and raking his leaves to get

on his good side—you have only yourself to blame if you aren't winning.

SETUP

KTM added Acerbis Rally guards and a couple of clicks of compression to the shock, and turned the fuel screw on the carb a tad richer. Other than those minor changes, the bike was stone stock.

Opinions

I was the lucky staffer who flew to Europe and rode the Farioli Team's bikes after the final round of the World Two-Day Enduro Championship. I knew then that the KTM four-stroke was going to be tough to beat. As far as I am concerned, nothing does beat it. It accelerates hard and has a blistering top speed while remaining totally docile and tractable at smaller throttle openings. The chassis is slim, strong and feels light. The seat feels a tad low, but otherwise I'd only need hand guards. I could happily ride and race the 400 anywhere. The only bike that beats it (and then only out West) is the KTM 520 E/XC. For the same weight, why not have a ton more power?

—Karel Kramer

KTM's 400 E/XC is very easy to ride. The engine has good response and pulls well all the way through the rpm range. Very easy to start. They should all have that little magic button, but only KTM managed to avoid a weight penalty. This bike tracks well but was a little harder to turn in the tight sections. I also experienced a little headshake, but I'd race and own one.

—Tom Carson

I didn't rate the KTM any lower than a 9 (out of 10) in any category. The bike feels good going fast, and it soaks up all the obstacles. The riding position makes the transition from sitting to standing effortless, and all the controls are in just the right place. Still, I rated the KTM second since the Husaberg felt a little more powerful and was lighter. I liked the electric start but used the kickstart, and the KTM was very easy to start. If KTM had brought the lighter kickstart model (the 400 SX motocrosser will have six speeds and lighting coils standard) it would have been first for me. I am willing to give up the starter motor for a lighter bike.

—Larry Larrabure

My shop actually sells most of these bikes, but, boy, these KTM four-strokes are just a whole rung up the ladder from the other bikes. I love the 400, but I'd probably take the 520, since it is the same weight. I couldn't find anything to fault on either of the E/XCs.

—Malcolm Smith

The KTM is awesome! The rider position is comfortable sitting or standing and the clutch is beautiful—low effort and no change all day. The motor is fast, fast, fast! I love being able to see through the tank to check fuel level. The front end tended to push a little and the brakes were touchy, but the KTM is still one of the best.

—Ed Tripp

Conga Line Comments

Bruce Lockwood: Really nice bike, but the electric start added to the weight, or I would have rated it above the Husaberg 400. It needs to be ridden harder than the Honda or Suzuki, but it rewards you with extra speed.

Ray Gibbs: This KTM 400 does everything well. Although it is not as powerful as the 520 (naturally), it still goes fast enough for me or anybody that I know of.

Keith Mertz: I thought I liked the DR-Z best, but that was before I rode the KTM 400. Very nice.

John Bumgarner: Love that button. The KTM shifted well under power. Clutch was one-finger with good engagement.

Tim Johnson: Good, good power.

Mark Getzfrid: The KTM 400 is a major fun machine. It has everything the 520 has, but just a little less. In some cases that is better. It's flickable and has suspension I rated near the top.

Bryan Abe: I chose the 400 E/XC over the Yamaha mostly because of the E-button.

Glenn Sizemore: Best power of the 400s, and the riding position feels as if it was made for me. I rated it first.

Eric Featherston: The KTM 400 might rate above the 520 if I lived back east, but since I live and ride in the desert, I'd pick the 520. It has a little more vibration but it rips!

Tom Burgess: The KTM 400 instantly got my attention! Why is it so totally smooth? For whatever reason, it's cool. I rated it first.



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screen type), and removing it would do nothing to aid the power but it would make you illegal in the forest.

There is no bike in the test that has suspension we felt was more plush than the DR-Z. We ran the clickers in a bit to battle bottoming, and the suspension was still plush. Start to push the DR-Z to the race speeds that the other bikes are capable of, though, and it begins to wallow, feel vague in the turns and bottom harshly. Riders in the east will be much happier than those in the west.

The same is true of the handling. Suzuki clearly chose to enhance the tight-woods handling of the DR-Z at the expense of high-speed confidence. The DR-Z is comfortable at its top speed on fairly smooth roads, but the six-speed KTM and the 'Berg have a good bit of top speed on the five-speed Suzuki.

The performance difference—engine and suspension—between the DR-Z and the leading Euro bikes is relatively small. The price difference is large, and Suzuki has already unveiled both a six-month warranty and a contingency program that will make the DR-Z very attractive to racers who live in areas that let them capitalize on the money offer.

Only 20 to 30 percent of the DR-Zs imported to the U.S. will be kickers like ours. Incidentally, Suzuki will have a kit to add a kickstart to the DR-Z400E electric-start bike (in addition to carbon-fiber accessories like those used by Mike Kiedrowski), but you cannot easily add the electric start to the kickstart bike. So, obviously, more of the DR-Z400Es will be sold. How does it stack up? The addition of the electric start makes the 400 even more convenient, but it takes what is already the heaviest 400 and makes it even heavier. Try 295 pounds full of gas and ready to ride. It hides that weight well, and before we got the bike on the scale we would have never guessed that high. Still, we have no doubt that the vagueness of the steering and the ease of suspension bottoming are directly related to the numbers on the scale. We used the DR-Z400E extensively while setting up the course and as our photo bike, and we can honestly say that most riders will not notice the extra 14 pounds that the magic button costs.

Judged strictly on performance, the



Judging by the reaction of our test crew, expectations for the Suzuki DR-Z were pretty low. Everyone seemed to expect it to be somewhat heavy and soft, but were amazed at the excellent performance potential, outstanding comfort and exceptional value. Karel Kramer was one of the bike's fans.

WHAT'S NEW

- Vertically split crankcase similar in size and layout to RM250 with additional space for counterbalancer shaft
- Pressed-together crankshaft (like RM250) with 62.6mm stroke (compared to DR350 71.2mm)
- Counterbalancer shaft has solid gear drive
- Aluminum cylinder with SCEM (Suzuki Composite Electrochemical Material) bore coating. Cylinder is similar in construction to Suzuki TL1000R cylinder
- Cylinder bore is 90mm compared to DR350's 79mm
- Liquid-cooled four-valve cylinder head similar in construction and valve angle to GSX-R750's or GSX1300R Hayabusa's
- Camshaft journal caps are machined with head and are not available separately
- Twin camshafts are similar to GSX-R camshafts, but naturally are much shorter and exhaust cam has automatic decompression mechanism
- Cams are driven by multi-plate-style cam chain similar to GSX1300R Hayabusa's
- Carburetor is Keihin FCR39 with throttle-position sensor and hot-start button
- No-tools, side-access airbox has double the air capacity of the DR350 airbox
- Chrome-moly frame is based on the RM250 design, with 28-degree steering head angle (same as RM125) and features removable aluminum subframe and RM cast footpegs
- Showa Twin-Chamber 49mm conventional fork and Showa shock with 16mm shock shaft are used. Linkage and swingarm pivot feature some zerk fittings
- Fuel tank is 2.6 gallons (0.1 gallon more than DR350)

WHAT'S HOT!

- Exceptionally plush and comfortable suspension action
- Even in totally standard 50-state-legal silent mode, the DR-Z offers good performance. In closed-course trim the power is totally competitive with the best European machines
- Clutch and transmission action are excellent
- No-tools air-cleaner access is very nice
- Soft, plush seat with good shape
- Bike comes fully off-road equipped except for hand guards
- Handling is very nimble, and biased toward tight trail maneuverability
- Engine is virtually vibration-free, and we never boiled it over
- MSRP of \$5249 is close to lowest price in comparison!
- Awesome contingency program
- Love the Dunlop D756 tires
- Six-month warranty

WHAT'S NOT!

- The heaviest of the kickstart 400s
- Seat foam wears and gets soft fairly quickly. Seat height not especially low
- Suspension feels soft and the steering gets vague when bike is pushed hard
- Must change the exhaust system for closed-course use. (We used a European DR-Z muffler for our test.)



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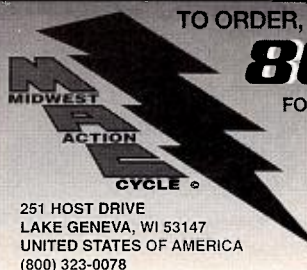
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Judgment Day Y2K 400cc off-road 24 HR shootout

DR-Z falls a little behind the purposeful KTM 400 E/XC; but when you factor in contingency, dealer availability and price, the Suzuki will look like a winner to lots of riders.

SETUP

Suzuki is in the same old position it was with the DR350. Its stock quiet exhaust system works very well; but where the Honda, Yamaha and Kawasaki can simply remove a baffle to reach an unrestricted, closed-course race state of tune, the DR-Z muffler would require internal cutting. We allowed the DR-Z to run a European-spec exhaust pipe. It uses the same end cap but approximates having some of the internal baffles cut out of the stock pipe.

Opinions

During the two weeks I worked on the course for the 24-Hour test I wouldn't let anyone ride the DR-Z400E unless I was using the Kawasaki Mule 4x4 farm truck. If we were working from the back of a bike, I wanted to be on the DR-Z. The bike really treats a body nice. The conventional fork is good to the wrists, the seat pampers my hiney and the shock is fine for my spine. Plus, our DR-Z400E is still totally stock and silent, and that makes for a minimum of energy depletion. I can go faster on the KTM, Husaberg and WR, but I can ride longer on the DR-Z. Plus, it fits my peanut-butter-and-jelly budget.

—Karel Kramer

I ranked the DR-Z400 first in the test. It is slower than some of the other bikes, but I felt confident on it at speed. It is a very easy-to-ride and well-balanced machine. For me, it wins based on that. This bike doesn't require a lot of energy. I'd be happy to own and race one.

—Tom Carson

The DR-Z ranks first as a trailbike for me. It has good, usable power, a natural riding position and good handling. At race speed the suspension is too bouncy and divey, so as a racer I rated it fourth, but with suspension mods the DR-Z400 will make a great race bike. I'd happily own and race one of these.

—Larry Larrabure

I would race a DR-Z. It's almost as fast as the WR, but it is more plush. It worked best in the choppy sections. I'd want the suspension stiffer and a new pipe, but then I'd be pretty happy with it.

—Trevor Vines

The DR-Z is too soft for racing in the western U.S., but it is great for play and technical riding. I like the low noise level, absence of vibration and the wide rpm range. The power is very easy to ride but still pulls well. For its weight, it feels fairly light and nimble. Love its cornering, brake- and power-slides.

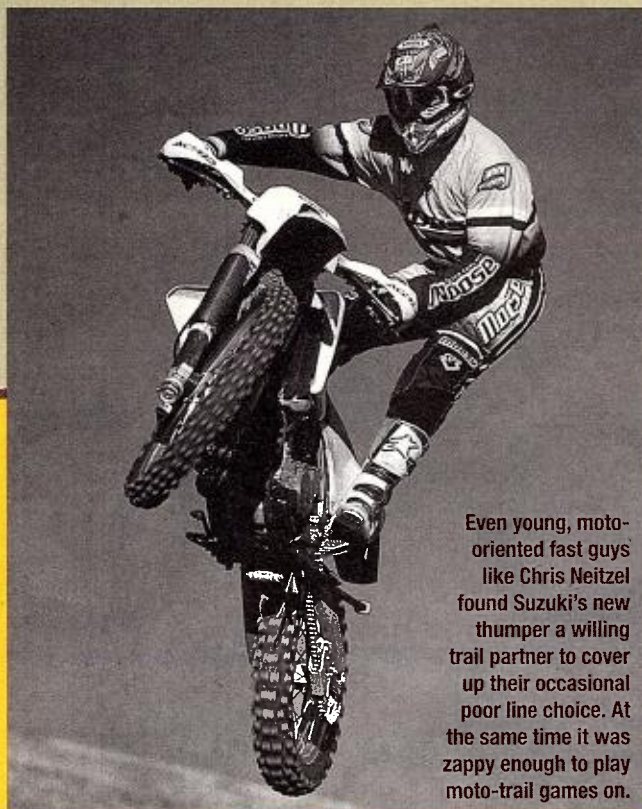
—Malcolm Smith

The DR-Z motors along well. You need to rev it to haul, but it still works OK on the bottom. Overall the bike is fast, smooth, comfy and works well. It stood up in turns and wandered in and out a little, but the motor is competitive. I could race this bike with a taller handlebar.

—Ed Tripp

Conga Line Comments

Bruce Lockwood: The DR-Z400 strikes a nice balance between the hard-edged Euro bikes and the Honda XR400R, though the DR-Z can be ridden harder than the Honda. It tracks and turns as well as anything.



Even young, moto-oriented fast guys like Chris Neitzel found Suzuki's new thumper a willing trail partner to cover up their occasional poor line choice. At the same time it was zappy enough to play moto-trail games on.

GARTH MILAN

Ray Gibbs: I felt right at home instantly on the DR-Z400. This bike surprised me. I thought it was going to be a warmed-over DR350—not so! I rated other bikes higher, but the Suzuki was one of the most fun to ride.

Keith Mertz: I fit on the DR-Z400 very well. It was my all-around favorite to ride until I rode the KTM.

John Bumgarner: The DR-Z really surprised me. It was a lot better than I thought it would be, and I liked it more the second time I rode it. It would work even better in the east.

Tim Johnson: Loved the motor, but it is too short for me.

Mark Getzfrid: Best Suzook thumper yet. It is definitely in the hunt in the mid-sized group. It worked best in the tight sections, but it won't be the first choice of taller riders.

George LaMonte: No stalling, easy starting, quiet exhaust and I love it!

Glenn Sizemore: I own an RM250, so the DR-Z fit me like a glove. It turns with no effort, has very smooth and manageable power, but the suspension is a little soft.

Eric Featherston: Fun all-around bike with good motor and handlebar placement.

Tom Burgess: What a surprise! Super bottom to mid power and nice suspension.

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VOR 400 ENDURO

VOR is a small Italian company just getting started in the U.S., and like other fledgling Euro companies, there is little or no development for the brand going on in the States. The importer simply buys the bikes the way they are developed in Europe with suspension settings and engine performance dialed in for European racing. A European enduro is a very different animal than an American enduro. The trail sections in most World Two-Day Enduro rounds are more like an American dual-sport ride. The actual scores are decided in a series of special tests. The VOR 400 Enduro feels as if it is set up for those motocross special tests and grass-track tests, not for the tight, choppy off-road sections found in American events.

The fork settles very little under the rider's weight, which affects the steering in tight sections. The suspension components at both ends are quite stiff, so the VOR isn't as plush as we expected an off-road bike to be. No doubt some of the "big" feel of the bike is due to the suspension riding high in the stroke.

The trade-off is that the VOR feels very good in sweepers and bermed turns. The chassis feels stable, but there is still some headshake. No doubt that is due to the initial firmness of the fork. On the plus side, the VOR can handle big hits and G-outs just fine.

Ergonomically, the VOR has a large, long feel to it. The early bikes we tried last year had a much taller seat; that seat gave the bike a very flat riding position and was easier to move around on. The 2000 model has a lower seat in an effort to make it easier for riders to reach the ground. The lower seat has a slope to it; that bothered some riders and had no effect on others. The other ergonomic flaw is a right-side number panel that catches on some boot tops.

The somewhat unconven-

tional engine polarized the test crew as well. The start lever moves forward like an old Honda ATC200X did. It actually works well, and the engine is a reliable starter. Most of the bikes in the test start with no throttle, but the VOR likes a tiny crack of the twist grip at the end of the kickstart stroke. Once running, the engine makes a fair amount of vibration, but it's more rumble than the intense buzzing of the Husaberg. The exhaust note is substantial, but the engine made more low-rpm torque than any of the other 400s. The power stays smooth and doesn't pull super hard through the middle of the powerband, but at higher rpm the engine makes hero horsepower. Shifting is

middle of the road, and the clutch action is good.

Overall the VOR feels a lot like a partially converted motocrosser. There are no flaws that keep the bike from becoming a highly effective racer with the proper setup. VOR also has a 503 Enduro, and we feel that bike might have fared a little better in our test. The 503 motor makes incredible power, and the large feel wouldn't be such a handicap as it is when compared to the light and flicky 400s. The VOR isn't really much larger than the other bikes, and at 273 pounds full of gas, the weight is right in the ballpark. If you don't mind a little dialing in and you dare to be different, the VOR will fill the bill.



The exotic VOR 400 Enduro is descended from hand-built, unobtainable works motocrossers. Nevertheless, the VOR required little special attention during the event. It makes serious power.

WHAT'S NEW

- Name—was called Vertemati in 1999
- Fork swap: from conventional fork to inverted Paioli design
- Revised swingarm
- Radiators moved back and closer to frame backbone to narrow the bike
- \$7300 suggested retail

WHAT'S HOT!

- Best bottom power of all the 400cc-class bikes
- Chassis setup is roomy for tall riders
- Fairly easy to start even though kickstarting forward is unusual
- High-rpm power is very good
- Suspension takes big hits well

WHAT'S NOT!

- Traditional Euro feel: long and stable with fairly slow handling
- Suspension settings are too stiff for off-road's small, choppy bumps; almost feels like MX settings
- Riding position and seat height not suited for shorter riders
- The right sidepanel hooks on boots
- Engine vibrates a lot

IFACTJ Belgian Joel Robert won SO 250cc World Championship GPs in his career.

MARK KAHYA

SETUP

The VOR arrived in the U.S. at the last moment, so the bike received hand guards, but otherwise ran totally stock.

Opinions

With an hour or two in the garage and some suspension setup, the VOR and I could get along just fine. I've ridden them on the motocross track, and there, they work well for me and are a lot of fun. The Enduro version is just too stiffly suspended to show the machine's true potential. I believe the 503 Enduro would have been more impressive, but either machine has all the big parts right. They just need some detailing.

—Karel Kramer

I had several problems riding this bike. It vibrates a lot, the fork is harsh and I didn't like the forward-motion kickstarter. The bike starts well enough and the engine makes good torque, but I couldn't ride a three-hour race with the bike stock.

—Tom Carson

The VOR has a long powerband with lots of power. The engine keeps revving and revving. It may be the fastest motor of all the 400s. It also has the most vibration. It is a good-handling bike, but the combination of big power and stiff suspension make it work to ride fast.

—Larry Larrabure

The size, weight and riding position are OK, and the engine is fast. The engine isn't too responsive, though, then the suspension is harsh. Left stock, the VOR wouldn't be good for a long race.

—Trevor Vines

I didn't like this bike at all. It blubbers down low, hits too hard and signs off too early. The gear ratio span is too short, and the engine vibrates.

—Malcolm Smith

The VOR felt more like a motocross bike than an enduro bike. The suspension was way too stiff for me. The seat is low and the handlebar high. It was the only bike I stalled or fell on. It was hard to evaluate the handling with the suspension set the way it was.

—Ed Tripp

Conga Line Comments

Bruce Lockwood: Great little engine that is a more willing revver than the Yamaha or Husaberg. It felt heavy in the tight sections, but was good in the sweepers. For trail duty the suspension is too rough.

Ray Gibbs: Who designed this kickstarter? The rest of the bike performed from well to very well. It felt nice and light and has an easy clutch. Didn't get to do much jumping but the VOR stayed straight over the kickers.

Keith Mertz: I felt a little too big on the VOR.

John Bumgarner: The 400 Enduro's motor pulls smoothly and constantly with no hit. It could use more power on top. The front end was sketchy. It deflected off square-edged hits.

Tim Johnson: Good power.

Mark Getzfrid: The VOR seat slopes radically from the front to the back. I liked it best standing.

Bryan Abe: Very good high-rpm power. If you want to scare yourself, the



The VOR is a great machine with handling traits that are more class European than some of the other new models. Taller riders were much more prone to feel confident on the VOR than shorter pilots.

VOR will do it.

Glenn Sizemore: The VOR's power is flat, but the top-end is OK. Good brakes and it feels light, but the suspension is too stiff.

Eric Featherston: This bike wins the Loud Bike Contest. It makes the snapiest power off the bottom. I would like to race this bike in a D-37 grand prix. It has major potential, but it needs ergo work.

Steve Garner/5'8"/165 lb/Expert: The VOR seat seems to have a valley in it.

Tom Burgess: The VOR has pretty good bottom, but man, does this thing like to rev. The rear end kicked on uphill whoops. Probably because of so much rev.

MITCH FRIEDMAN

STACY ARLIN

KEITH SMITH AND CORY HATCH

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YAMAHA
WR400F

Our test 1998 Yamaha WR400F completed an intro, the 24-Hour test, several high-speed desert events, months of trail riding and some motocross. It required nothing more than oil changes, and still felt great at the end of the year. For off-road use, our staff is much happier starting with the WR than with the YZ. The flywheel inertia, the wide ratio and the cam timing all make the WR a much more fun mount than a YZ in our book.

The newest version of the WR is a definite improvement. It started easily, and the carburetion was flawless. Even detuned, compared to the YZ426, the WR is still a horsepower factory. It hits hard and pulls strongly everywhere in the powerband. The new carburetor seems to be doing its job. The reliability of this engine simply amazes us. Putting out this sort of power seems like it would shorten the fuse, but it is stone reliable.

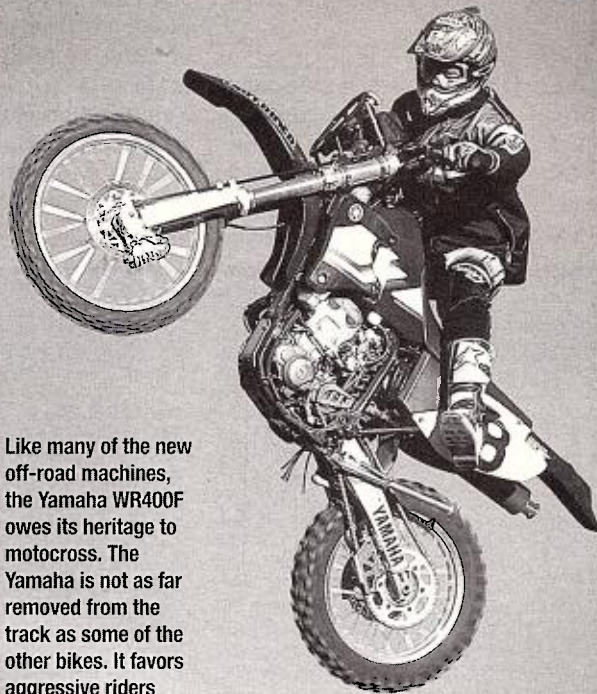
The strong reputation for reliability and build quality make it easy to consider the WR as a 400cc purchase. We have to say that the WR is a more attractive option for riders in the western half of the U.S. The WR makes you think a bunch of motocross racers and desert racers sat around and brainstormed about what an off-road bike should be. Yamaha claims many improvements for the 2000 model's suspension, but both ends are still very firm. It literally feels as though you could race motocross with the stock suspension.

In 1999, Yamaha relocated the linkage pivot point higher on the swingarm, and the rear of the bike felt high and sloped sharply toward the tank. The 2000 subframe erases most of that feeling. The WR is easy to move around on, and the suspension is balanced front to rear. In choppy bumps the WR feels a little short-coupled—as if the wheelbase is short and the center of gravity is a little high. None of these sensations is extreme, but with more bikes in the class, little details count more and more.

Oddly enough, since the ergonomics have not changed, the thinly padded seat and chubby tank didn't bother a lot of testers. Still, the IMS tank and the matching YZ-style seat carry the weight a lot lower and let the rider get farther forward than the stock items do. We'd say that steering and turning are definitely improved for 2000 by pulling the steering head pipe back.

If you are the type of rider who stands up, gets the bit in your teeth and wicks the throttle hard, then the WR will totally reward you. Far too many early buyers thought the WR would be a better XR400R and they were very disappointed.

The WR is not easy to ride or especially easy on the rider.



Like many of the new off-road machines, the Yamaha WR400F owes its heritage to motocross. The Yamaha is not as far removed from the track as some of the other bikes. It favors aggressive riders and doesn't take well to trail cruising.

GARTH MILAN

WHAT'S NEW

- New Keihin FCR carburetor (exclusive to Yamaha) with a vertical slide angle, more float-bowl volume and the accelerator pump contained inside the carb body
- KYB 46mm fork now uses a lower-friction internal surface treatment on the outer tube, lighter aluminum piston rod and a low-friction dust seal
- Aluminum tubing rear subframe
- Stronger, lighter steel tubing used for main frame, and steering head pipe moved back 5mm
- KYB shock uses an aluminum seal holder and separate high- and low-speed external compression damping adjustment
- Handlebar position moved 10mm forward on triple clamp
- Lower triple clamp has a new strengthening rib on the underside, and the fork tube clamping area is 5mm taller
- New clutch perch with a better lever ratio, new lever blade shape and a quick-adjust feature built in
- 2000 YZ front fender is used

WHAT'S HOT!

- The WR engine is much more flexible off-road than the YZ400/426, but still hits hard and makes massive power
- Motocross heritage shows through in great handling
- Suspension handles big slammers well
- Fully equipped for off-road; just needs hand guards
- Price (\$5899) is the same as 1999
- WR now available in California, and production numbers are up
- Riding position is improved by handlebar location
- Forest-legal in stock form
- 30-day warranty

WHAT'S NOT!

- Loud in closed-course form
- Firm seat has little padding
- WR seat/tank keep rider back in turns (compared to YZ)
- Suspension action not plush—the settings seem more desert-oriented than for woods
- Three pounds heavier than electric-start KTM

IFACTJ Kevin Windham was the AMA Rookie of the Year in 1994 and finished fifth at the 125cc national in Delmont, Pennsylvania.



It is a hard-core race weapon. Be realistic about who you are and how you ride. It is vital to your enjoyment of the WR400F.

SETUP

Yamaha made its normal closed-course modifications. The airbox top was removed and the baffle taken out of the end of the pipe. Then the carb was jetted and the screw that acts as a throttle stop was shortened 10mm to 23.4mm.

The standard OBDRS needle was changed from the second to the fourth clip position. The air screw position is standard (1.625), and the 42 pilot and 165 main jets are standard. Yamaha's accessory division sells a plastic brush deflector-type hand guard, so they were bolted up to protect the digits.

Six-time national enduro champ Randy Hawkins races a Yamaha four-stroke. He prefers to start building his race bikes with a WR, since he likes the WR gearbox better. Our staff agrees with him—even for out west.



MITCH FRIEDMAN

Opinions

I'm positive that I am faster on the WR than on any of the other bikes, but I have to be. The engine hits hard and pulls strongly everywhere, and the suspension settings are very aggressive. If I hammer the throttle hard and burn energy, the WR rips. At least in stock form, I'd have a lot more energy at the end of a long race on another bike. For play riding in the desert I love the WR, and I know that this bike holds up great, but I'd like it better with an IMS seat/tank combo and plusher suspension.

—Karel Kramer

The WR has the most torque of any of the 400s. It is easy to stay a gear taller and slip the clutch to keep the momentum going. I had some mixed feelings about the WR. Being a motocrosser for many years, I like the stable feeling, but it was way too stiff for me. After I took some high-speed compression out, the suspension was better, but since I raced the GNCC series for a few years, I know that the stock bike would be a handful after three hours. I still have trouble starting the WR in some situations. It needs the E-button.

—Tom Carson

I wouldn't rate the WR first as a race bike or a trailbike. It doesn't do anything better than the other bikes. As a race bike I rate it third, but as a trailbike I rate it second—but only for skilled riders. It isn't a beginner bike. The faster and harder you ride it the better. It feels a little bigger than the other bikes. Maybe it is the wide tank that makes you ride back on the seat.

—Larry Larrabure

The WR sits a little high and the center of gravity feels high. The fork seemed stiff, too, so less aggressive riders may struggle a little. The power works well for off-road. If I did a lot of off-road riding and racing, I would own this bike,

but I would make some mods to the suspension and the exhaust.

—Trevor Vines

The WR would be easy to race with some suspension work, and owning one would be a good experience as well. The motor is strong, shifts well, has nicely matched gear ratios and has no vibration. Our evaluation sheets asked how each bike would be in a three-hour race (or longer). That question is the leveler here. The bike is too firm and the seat too skimpy to race for that long. Everything else is great.

—Ed Tripp

Conga Line Comments

Bruce Lockwood: The WR's front wheel doesn't feel as planted as my '99 YZ400. The wider tank makes it harder to get forward. I really noticed the weight in the tight sections, but the extra flywheel weight felt nice.

Ray Gibbs: Good package! The clutch pull could be a tiny bit easier, but maybe the hydraulic units on the other scooters spoiled me a bit.

John Bumgarner: Lots of power for a 400. The front end sticks. It was easy to go fast right away.

Tim Johnson: The Yamaha was loud, shifted notchy, was too low in the front and was too harsh on little bumps.

Mark Getzfrid: This motor is in the hunt! Good overall comfort factor. The front end felt sluggish compared to some other bikes'.

Bryan Abe: The WR engine has power that is

easy to manage and pull predictably with no surprises, but it is loud. The suspension was good for the speed I ride. I don't like the seat/tank junction. I smashed my private package.

Kevin Waites/6'2"/185 lb/Intermediate: Too cool! I gave it a perfect score.

George LaMonte: The WR was a little stiff, and it was easy to start and stall.

Glenn Sizemore: The Yamaha was the only bike I stalled, and the suspension was a little stiff.

Eric Featherston: Yamaha's ergos still need work. The pegs are high, the bars are low and back. It stalls easily, but it is a good-turning bike and the suspension was plush for me.

Tom Burgess: I should favor the WR since I own a YZ400 and I liked the bike, but I liked the others better.



The Conga Line came in to handle the night shift once again. They did a professional job, and the rest of us appreciated the respite. Wondering about the name? These guys have been riding together for many years, and they frequently follow a leader through the desert looking for trails to bump and jump while riding single file. The vision has been described as looking like a line of ballroom dancers doing the Conga. Together the group probably has 200 years of off-road riding experience.

YAMAHA 1-800-755-2112 HONDA



FORK SEALS

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 7.94 |
| YZ125 | 96-00 | 7.95 |
| YZ250 | 96-00 | 7.95 |
| CR80 | 87-96 | 16.57 |
| | 97-00 | 16.62 |
| CR125 | 94-96 | 19.99 |
| | 97 | 22.01 |
| | 98-99 | 13.24 |
| | 00 | 12.54 |
| CR250 | 96-96 | 19.99 |
| | 97-98 | 18.08 |
| | 99-00 | 16.51 |
| CR500 | 95-00 | 13.24 |

FIBER PLATES

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 7.25 |
| YZ125 | 96-97 | 8.99 |
| | 98-00 | 6.75 |
| YZ250 | 96-00 | 11.25 |
| CR80 | 83-96 | 6.04 |
| | 97-00 | 6.56 |
| CR125 | 85-96 | 6.25 |
| | 97-00 | 7.51 |
| CR250 | 83-96 | 7.99 |
| | 97-98 | 8.99 |
| | 99-00 | CALL |
| CR500 | 87-96 | 16.57 |
| | 97-00 | 16.62 |

ALLOY PLATES

| | | |
|-------|-------|------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 9.99 |
| YZ125 | 96-00 | 6.99 |
| YZ250 | 96-00 | 9.65 |
| CR80 | 87-96 | 4.49 |
| | 97-00 | 4.90 |
| CR125 | 85-96 | 6.25 |
| | 97-00 | 8.17 |
| CR250 | 87-96 | 7.50 |
| | 97 | 8.00 |
| | 98 | 8.88 |
| | 99-00 | CALL |
| CR500 | 93-00 | 8.88 |

STEEL PLATES

| | | |
|-------|-------|------|
| CR80 | 87-00 | CALL |
| CR125 | 83-96 | 5.50 |
| | 99-00 | CALL |
| CR250 | 84-96 | 6.50 |
| | 97-98 | 6.75 |
| | 99-00 | CALL |
| CR500 | 93-00 | 6.75 |

N-STYLE BIKE GRAPHICS

| | |
|-----------|--------|
| YZ80 | 129.00 |
| YZ125/250 | 149.00 |
| YZ400 | 149.00 |
| CR 92-96 | 149.00 |
| CR 97-99 | 149.00 |
| CR80s | 129.00 |

CLUTCH CABLES

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 96 | 17.63 |
| | 97-00 | 13.99 |
| YZ125 | 96-00 | 19.87 |
| YZ250 | 96-98 | 13.95 |
| | 99-00 | 17.30 |
| CR80 | 93-96 | 9.39 |
| | 97-00 | 10.75 |
| CR125 | 93-96 | 11.56 |
| | 97 | 12.54 |
| | 98 | 11.88 |
| | 99-00 | 10.97 |
| CR250 | 84-96 | 14.15 |
| | 97 | 12.39 |
| | 98 | 13.55 |
| | 99 | CALL |
| | 00 | 15.98 |
| CR500 | 93-00 | 11.68 |

CLUTCH LEVERS

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 15.88 |
| YZ125 | 96-00 | 15.88 |
| YZ250 | 96-00 | 15.88 |
| CR80 | 83-96 | 10.26 |
| | 97-00 | 11.54 |
| CR125 | 83-96 | 11.44 |
| | 97 | 12.43 |
| | 98 | 11.50 |
| | 99-00 | CALL |
| CR250 | 83-96 | 11.44 |
| | 97-98 | 11.50 |
| | 99-00 | CALL |
| CR500 | 93-00 | 11.50 |

FRT. BRAKE LVR.

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 96 | 13.77 |
| | 97-00 | 17.95 |
| YZ125 | 96-00 | 17.95 |
| YZ250 | 96-00 | 17.95 |
| CR80 | 97 | 12.09 |
| | 98-00 | 11.92 |
| CR125 | 97-00 | 11.92 |
| CR250 | 97-00 | 11.92 |
| CR500 | 97-00 | 11.92 |

SHIFT LEVER

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| CR80 | 83-96 | 30.87 |
| | 97-00 | 32.16 |
| CR125 | 83-96 | 51.33 |
| | 97 | 49.01 |
| | 98 | 31.48 |
| | 99-00 | 34.48 |
| CR250 | 94-96 | 55.05 |
| | 97-00 | 31.81 |
| CR500 | 89-96 | 43.34 |
| | 97-00 | 47.03 |

BRAKE PEDAL

| | | |
|-------|-------|--------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 58.18 |
| YZ125 | 96 | 97.27 |
| | 97-00 | 100.15 |
| YZ250 | 96 | 97.27 |
| | 97-00 | 100.15 |
| CR80 | 97 | 35.04 |
| | 98-00 | 46.18 |
| CR125 | 97 | 68.50 |
| | 98-00 | 51.24 |
| CR250 | 97-00 | 48.00 |
| CR500 | 97-00 | 62.55 |

FRT. BRAKE PADS

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 96 | 46.35 |
| | 97 | 48.08 |
| | 98-00 | 44.37 |
| YZ125 | 96-97 | 72.70 |
| | 98-00 | 36.95 |
| YZ250 | 96-97 | 72.50 |
| | 98-00 | 36.95 |
| CR80 | 94-96 | 27.63 |
| | 97 | 24.95 |
| | 98-00 | 26.24 |
| CR125 | 95-96 | 27.79 |
| | 97-00 | 32.54 |
| CR250 | 95-96 | 27.79 |
| | 97-00 | 32.54 |
| CR500 | 95-96 | 27.79 |
| | 97-00 | 32.54 |

REAR BRAKE PADS

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 46.80 |
| YZ125 | 96-97 | 39.00 |
| | 98-00 | 29.00 |
| YZ250 | 96-97 | 39.00 |
| | 98-00 | 29.00 |
| CR80 | 92-96 | 24.31 |
| | 97-98 | 24.95 |
| | 99-00 | CALL |
| CR125 | 95-96 | 27.79 |
| | 97-00 | 24.95 |
| CR250 | 87-96 | 24.31 |
| | 97-00 | 24.95 |
| CR500 | 87-96 | 24.31 |
| | 97-00 | 24.95 |

GASKET SETS

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| CR80 | 93-96 | 28.97 |
| | 97-00 | 30.53 |
| CR125 | 92-96 | 39.43 |
| | 97-00 | 49.45 |
| CR250 | 94-97 | 57.60 |
| | 98-00 | CALL |
| CR500 | 94-96 | 55.82 |
| | 97-00 | 48.49 |

RADIATORS

| | | |
|-------|----|--------|
| CR250 | 97 | 252.76 |
| | 98 | 252.79 |
| | 99 | CALL |

RINGS

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 10.28 |
| YZ125 | 96-00 | 9.50 |
| YZ250 | 96-98 | 36.50 |
| | 99-00 | 39.95 |
| CR80 | 86-96 | 19.33 |
| | 97-00 | 12.48 |
| CR125 | 90-96 | 14.43 |
| | 97-00 | 15.66 |
| CR250 | 92-96 | 29.84 |
| | 97-00 | 31.53 |
| CR500 | 84-96 | 33.57 |
| | 97-00 | 36.43 |

PISTONS

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 48.65 |
| YZ125 | 96 | 36.72 |
| | 97-98 | 61.51 |
| | 99-00 | 49.99 |
| YZ250 | 96-98 | 55.08 |
| | 99-00 | 56.30 |
| CR80 | 83-00 | 37.42 |
| CR125 | 92-96 | 54.95 |
| | 97-00 | 59.90 |
| | 00 | 39.95 |
| CR250 | 92-96 | 59.99 |
| | 97-98 | 80.47 |
| | 99-00 | 59.95 |
| CR500 | 95-96 | 85.73 |
| | 97-00 | 93.06 |

CRANK SHAFTS

| | | |
|-------|-------|--------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 217.02 |
| YZ125 | 96-97 | 264.31 |
| | 98-00 | 267.25 |
| YZ250 | 96-97 | 258.59 |
| | 98 | 232.85 |
| | 99-00 | 285.45 |
| CR80 | 86-96 | 119.33 |
| | 97-00 | 129.49 |
| CR125 | 90-96 | 159.95 |
| | 97-00 | 129.00 |
| CR250 | 95-96 | 244.94 |
| | 97-00 | 190.82 |
| CR500 | 97-00 | 260.48 |

RADIATORS (RIGHT)

| | | |
|-------|-------|--------|
| YZ80 | 96-00 | 290.75 |
| YZ125 | 96-00 | 261.32 |
| YZ250 | 96-00 | 307.53 |
| CR125 | 95-96 | 167.84 |
| | 97 | 182.13 |
| | 98 | 267.27 |
| | 99 | ----- |
| | 00 | 119.00 |
| CR250 | 94-96 | 168.30 |
| | 00 | 119.00 |
| CR500 | 97-00 | 245.45 |

CYLINDERS

| | | |
|-------|-------|--------|
| YZ80 | 96 | 312.12 |
| | 97-00 | 264.67 |
| YZ125 | 96-97 | 264.87 |
| | 98 | 229.95 |
| | 99-00 | 235.00 |
| YZ250 | 96 | 287.06 |
| | 97 | 299.08 |
| | 98 | 280.00 |
| | 99-00 | 312.10 |
| CR80 | 86-96 | 220.13 |
| | 97-00 | 267.94 |
| CR125 | 93-96 | 290.10 |
| | 97 | 287.23 |
| | 98 | 239.10 |
| | 99-00 | 228.00 |
| CR250 | 95-96 | 338.09 |
| | 97 | 259.87 |
| | 98-00 | 249.95 |

Alpinestar Boots

| | |
|--------|------|
| Tech 8 | CALL |
| Tech 5 | CALL |

Braking

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| Rotors Frt&Rear | 109.00 |
| Semi Metallic | 22.95 |
| Full Metallic | 24.95 |

Hinson

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Clutch Baskets | 199.95 |
|----------------|--------|

Renthal Products

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Grips | 9.50 |
| Grip Glue | 5.95 |
| Rider Bars | 71.95 |
| Std. Bars | 66.95 |
| Frt Sprocket from | 19.95 |
| Rear Sprocket | 51.95 |
| Renthal Pads from | 10.95 |

Chain&Sprocket Kits

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Renthal Frt&Rear | |
| Std. Chain | 93.95 |
| O Ring Chain | 114.95 |
| DID Works | 134.95 |

Pro Circuit

| | |
|---------------------|--------|
| Pipes Works/Plat | 154.95 |
| Fac. 304 Silencers | 69.95 |
| Alum. Throttle Body | 44.95 |
| Works Stand | 69.95 |

Wiseco

| | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| YZ80 | 49.95 | YZ125 | 64.95 |
| YZ250 | 72.95 | YZ490 | 94.95 |

RADIATORS (LEFT)

| | | |
|-------|-------|--------|
| YZ80 | | |
| YZ125 | 96-00 | 292.20 |
| YZ250 | 96-00 | 396.95 |
| CR125 | 95-96 | 152.60 |
| | 97 | 165.60 |
| | 00 | 107.33 |
| CR250 | 92-96 | 127.87 |
| | 00 | 105.05 |
| CR500 | 97-00 | 188.50 |

OILS

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| HP2 | 4.25 |
| HP TRANS | 4.09 |
| Yamalube (R) | 2.99 |
| Yamalube (25) | 2.75 |
| Maxima Super M (16) | 3.89 |
| Maxima Super M (64) | 13.49 |
| Maxima 927 (16) | 4.89 |
| Maxima 927 (64) | 16.95 |
| Bel-Ray MCI | 3.29 |
| Bel-Ray MCI 1/2gal | 34.95 |
| Waterwetter | 6.95 |

Applied Clamps

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| Top Clamps | |
| Standard | 119.95 |
| Pro Taper | 119.95 |
| Top & Bot. Kits | 249.95 |
| Top 250 Rubber Mt. | 129.95 |
| Pro Taper | 89.95 |

UFO Plastics

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Rear Fenders (from) | 17.00 |
| Front Fenders | 17.00 |
| Radiator Shrouds | 33.95 |
| Side Panels | 35.95 |
| Front Plates | 19.95 |
| Fork Guards | 36.95 |

Boyesen Reeds

| | |
|----------------------|--------|
| Boyesen Reeds (from) | 21.95 |
| Carbon Reeds (from) | 34.95 |
| Rad Valves | 119.00 |
| Ignition cover | 59.95 |

V-Force

| | |
|-------|------|
| Reeds | CALL |
|-------|------|

DSP Carbon Products

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Skid Plate | CALL |
| Frame Guard | CALL |

Works Connection

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Frame Guards | 43.95 |
| Skid Plates | 52.95 |
| Clutch Perch | 53.95 |
| Adjustable Perch | 74.95 |

Bell Helmets

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Troy Replica | |
| Yamaha/Honda | 249.95 |
| Volcano | 229.95 |
| Replica Moto 6 | 170.00 |
| Moto SL | 115.95 |
| MX Off Road | 94.95 |
| Moto 7 | 294.00 |

Twin Air

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Air Filters (from) | 21.95 |
|--------------------|-------|

Dunlop Tires

| | | |
|------|------------|-------|
| D752 | 100/100-18 | 49.95 |
| D752 | 110/100-18 | 53.95 |
| D752 | 100/90-19 | 53.95 |
| D752 | 110/90-19 | 57.95 |
| D752 | 80/100-21 | 49.95 |
| K695 | 100/100-18 | 49.95 |
| K695 | 110/100-18 | 53.95 |
| K695 | 100/90-19 | 54.95 |
| K695 | 110/90-10 | 59.00 |
| K490 | 80/100-21 | 49.95 |
| D737 | 100/100-18 | 55.95 |
| D737 | 110/100-18 | 59.00 |
| D737 | 100/90-19 | 59.00 |
| D737 | 110/90-19 | 59.95 |

WRAPPING IT UP

Every bike in this test has (and deserves) a pool of customers. Each is different from the other in enough ways that they segment the market by appealing to different types of riders. In some cases the appeal is based on where the riders live. We can't say what is a bargain to you personally or what constitutes value or even a quality dealer network, because opinions vary on those points. So we generally call our shootout winners on performance, then list the prices and let readers determine their own personalized smile-per-dollar ratio.

Judging strictly on performance, the World Championship-winning KTM 400 E/XC is the winner. It keeps a toehold in every category. The engine is powerful, the suspension is plush yet works at race speeds, it is reasonably light by any standards (but very light for an electric-start bike) and it is just refined enough.

Just a hair behind the KTM (again judged on performance) are a group that includes the ultralight Husaberg, super-plush Suzuki and the class bully Yamaha WR. Each of these bikes is extremely different from the others and has very different strengths, but the end results all tally up to roughly the same line. The Husaberg has many of the good traits of the KTM, but weighs over 20 pounds less! It is the obvious choice of the rider who values empirical performance above creature comforts. We were very impressed with the solid feel of the latest 'Berg. This baby feels as if it can go the distance with no problem. The Suzuki earns major Brownie points in all areas of comfort. It is heavy and the suspension is perhaps a bit too supple for serious racing, but the DR-Z400 doesn't sap your karma. Your attention won't be drawn by any annoyances. You won't be bothered by small bumps, a sore rump or vibrations of any size. The Suzuki is soft and smooth in every way that it interfaces with your body. To draw an automotive analogy, the KTM is a BMW, the Husaberg is a Porsche Turbo, the Suzuki is a Lexus and the Yamaha is a Mustang GT—with a supercharger. The WR is a little raw around the edges, and it definitely plays better out west than back east, but buddy, five valves make a mean motor. It rips.

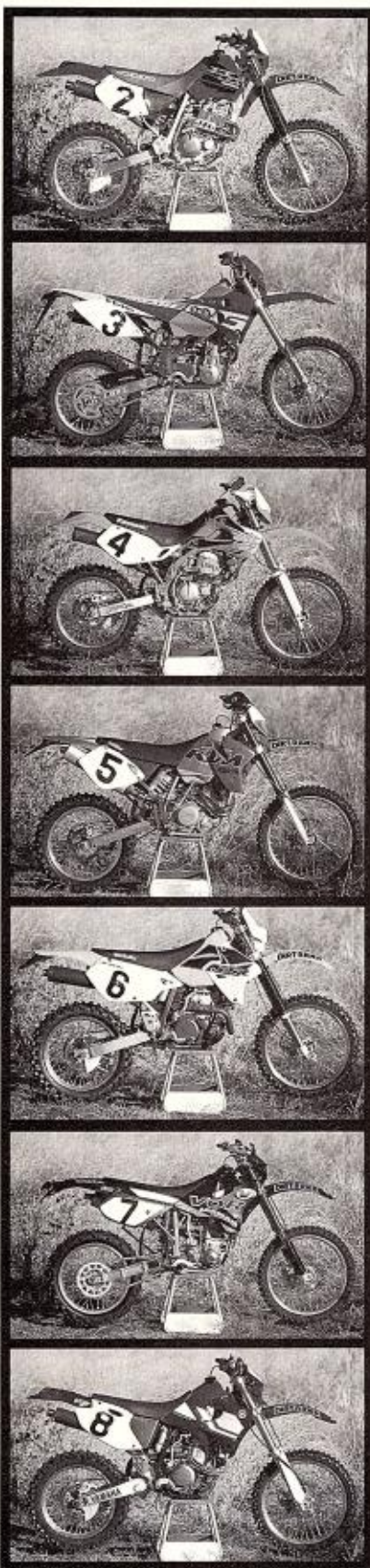
Meanwhile the Italian VOR is a Shelby Cobra Kit Car. It offers nasty, vis-

ceral performance, but some assembly is required to smooth the edges. The VOR is descended from exotic works motocrossers built by hand by the two brothers Vertemati. They came close to winning a World MX title and had some heavy names ride for them. The moto heritage is still a little strong. Some suspension work and a little in-garage detailing will go a long way with the VOR.

At another level we find the XR400R and the Kawasaki KLX300. Neither are top-notch race bikes, though either will kick butt in an event that is nasty and technical enough. The KLX will never suffer for an audience, since it is the only choice for serious, but short or light riders. The XR looks really good to those who insist on decade-long reliability. Have you priced a radiator lately?

In the case of these seven middle-weights, though, we have to point out some nonperformance factors that may influence your purchasing decision. While the KTM is the clear performance winner, not nearly enough bikes are being imported to meet the demand for 2000 models. The Suzuki bridges the gap between the trouble-free, easy-to-own trail-bikes and the high-performance trio. It can match their performance but will take modification to do so. In the east the Suzuki (stock) would actually rate above the Husaberg and the Yamaha WR. In addition, the DR-Z400 (and 400E) is available in ample numbers, and its performance is only marginally shy of the best Euro bikes, and not in any area that is beyond an easy fix. It retails lower than any 400cc machine in the test, has a six-month warranty and is eligible for over \$1 million in contingency. For example, if you happen to smoke all the heroes in the AA class at a GNCC, you'd collect \$2500. But on a more realistic note, if you win the four-stroke novice (C) class (or many other classes) at a GNCC, a District 37 Grand Prix or 12 other big series throughout the country, you'd collect \$400 for first and so forth down to \$25 for fifth place. (Kawasaki and Yamaha also have off-road contingency options, and Honda offers motocross contingency programs. In the unlikely event that you win a posted motocross event on an XR, you will win contingency.) However you look at the Suzuki, it looks like a winner.

DR





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C-6001
INTERMEDIATE
TERRAIN

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HUSABERG FE600E/GUY COOPER



KTM 520 E/XC/MIKE LAFFERTY

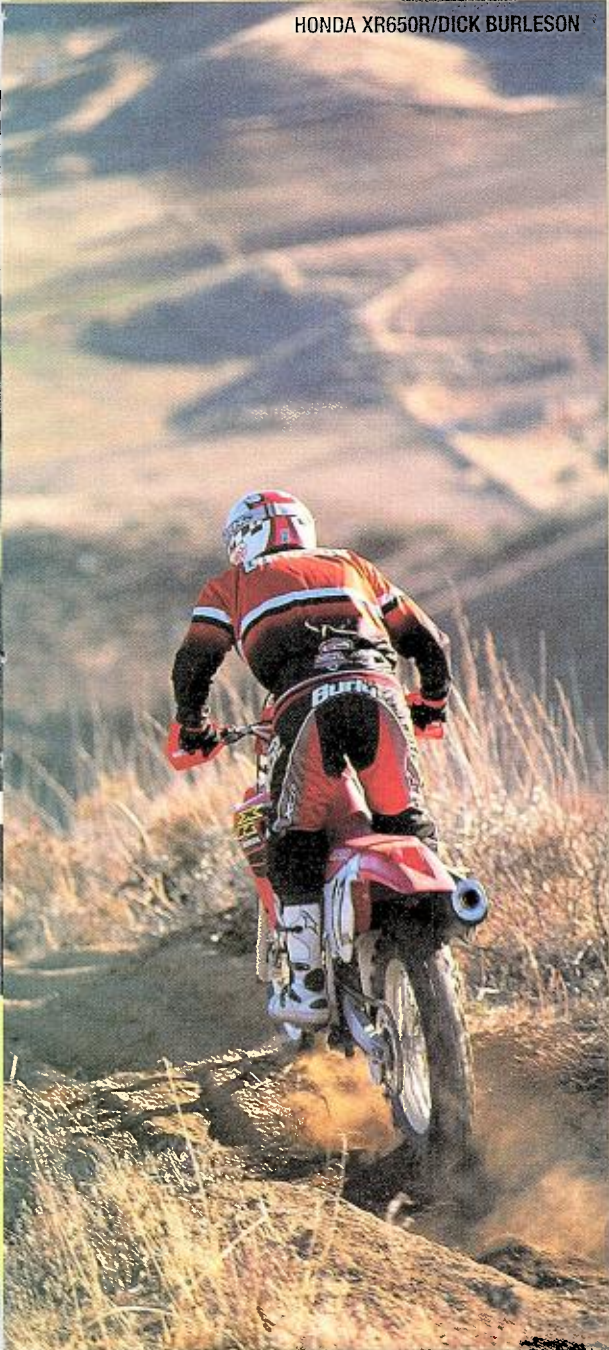
All-New Big-Bores Go Head to Head

One strange phenomenon of the new millennium was made obvious at *Dirt Rider's* annual 24-Hour shootout: Everybody has a big truck. Take a look at the pits of a supercross. If you don't have a 53-foot semi-trailer, don't even bother. Former National Enduro Champ Mike Lafferty, who owns a V-10-powered motor home/box van, could hardly contain himself around all the big, "power-stroke," dually, six-wheel-drive, four-door mega-trucks (carrying only the driver) in the pits. He'll own one before this is in print, just you watch. America—you gotta love it.

So what's this got to do with our Open-class four-stroke shootout? Well, nothing and everything, because in both cases we're talking about need versus want. And just as in the world of trucks, big-displacement thumpers have come of age, and everybody's gotta have one. You can do a lot of work with a short-bed, four-cylinder mini-truck, but it's just more fun (and sometimes easier, faster and more convenient) to use a big truck. The same mentality applies to these big-bore four-strokes. It's possible to go really fast on an XR250R, but no question, it's more

24HR

HONDA XR650R/DICK BURLESON



HONDA XR650R



HUSABERG FE600E



KTM 520 E/XC

fun with 40 more horsepower. So not only are the big-bores in the test more fun (and just plain impressive by the numbers), in many cases they are as light as smaller-bore thumpers or even some enduro-equipped two-strokes. Virtually all have way more power than needed and can propel any rider at eyeball-rattling speed without working up a sweat.

Since midsize thumpers are multiplying like rabbits, we opted to invite only Open-class four-strokes that are new or

radically updated models. For this Y2K test, the new Honda XR650R, a Husaberg FE600E and a KTM 520 E/XC responded to the call. Only the Husaberg engine is even remotely similar to what was offered in 1999. The Husaberg chassis and the Honda and KTM machines are completely new. All three test bikes have smaller brothers in our "Judgment Day" 24-Hour 400cc test.

This year's test course, held at the Petersen Ranch, was easily the longest and most technical one yet. The plan

was to make one lap an hour long, so that the logistics of keeping the testers on some sort of schedule would work out better. In addition, a near lack of rain in the year since the last 24-Hour meant that dust was going to be a problem. Spreading out the course would reduce the stress-per-mile on the riders and terrain. Because of the dryness, the loop had more difficult hill climbs and tighter trails than before to allow a more thorough evaluation of the bikes over a wider range of conditions.

HONDA XR650R

After 10 years of successful sales and racing results, Honda finally decided to replace the venerable air-cooled XR600R. Honda set out to better the XR in comfort, handling, power and speed, and has succeeded in all of these areas. An all-new liquid-cooled engine, cradled in the all-new aluminum chassis, makes a strong power statement and brings the big XR up to some serious speed in a heartbeat. Our test bike was modified to closed-course specifications—with a 40mm outlet diameter spark arrestor (part number 18317-MBN-640), an unrestricted intake manifold (part number 16211-MBN-640), the main jet switched from 125 to 175, the needle clip moved from #2 to #4 and the airbox intake baffles removed. According to Honda product evaluation ace Bruce Ogilvie, to make the conversion and bring the power up from 43 to 55 horsepower, all of the changes must be done together. We tested the bike only in this configuration, and the power was no less than awesome—sort of like an Impala SS on steroids. It has chunky, grunty torque from just above idle, gets stronger in the middle rpm and pulls hard on the top. The bike carbureted perfectly, and with a silky smooth clutch and shifting, there is never a time or condition where we could run out of power. The new aluminum chassis has a one-inch-longer wheelbase, and the combined stiffness of the frame and the stable

geometry mean the power of the engine can be used at speed with a comfort and stability unknown in the older XR chassis.

While comfort, handling, power and stability were the main benefits of the new XR development, excess poundage was an unfortunate result. Ready to go, with 2.6 gallons (a little less than 20 pounds) in the tank, the big XR busted the scales at 302 pounds. This was 30 pounds heavier than the fully gassed KTM 520 with electric start, and 17 pounds heavier than our test Husaberg 600. And yet it is a kickstart-only engine. The net effect is

WHAT'S NEW

- MSRP of \$5699
- All-new, lightweight, single-backbone aluminum frame that doubles as oil tank
- Removable aluminum subframe
- Tapered aluminum swingarm, pivot combined with rear engine mount
- Kayaba 46mm conventional cartridge fork with external compression and rebound adjusters
- One-piece, high-impact plastic skid plate
- All-new, liquid-cooled, four-valve, SOHC, 649cc engine with Nikasil cylinder lining
- 25 percent more power than XR600R
- 2-into-1 SS head pipes and USFS-approved screen-style spark arrestor
- Magnesium clutch cover
- 5-speed transmission
- Keihin 40mm carburetor

WHAT'S HOT!

- Big power all the way
- Very solid steering
- Chassis stable at speed
- Smooth and controlled suspension settings
- Honda fit and finish
- Flex-free aluminum frame
- Comfortable ergonomics

WHAT'S NOT!

- Weight a tad over 300 pounds, full of gas
- No electric start
- Low first gear, gap to second
- Stock gearing way too tall

that on the fast dirt road sections or even the trail sections that flow and allow momentum, the solid and stable chassis and powerful engine worked wonderfully. But in the very tight technical sections, it proved the laws of physics are still in effect, as the bike was difficult to change direction,

OPINIONS

Come on, what is Honda thinking? This isn't progress; this is a bike and race truck gene-spliced together. This is one *big* motorcycle, and for me, just way too big. Sure the power was fun, and the new chassis brings the handling up into the '90s...but wait, this is the 2000s. I hated kickstarting the bike. I couldn't touch the ground at all, and in about a quarter of a lap, it totally wore me out trying to turn it. Not even close.

—Dick Bureson/5'7"/150 lb/Eight-time national enduro champ

I have a sneaky suspicion that the toasted clutch is at least partly my doing. I had the XR650R out in the desert for two days giggling at all the gnarly sand hills I could get the XR on—hills that would have had a hot-rodded, air-cooled XR chucking its guts up. Once, I faded the clutch all the way on a single hill with wholesale abuse. If you are getting the idea that I like the XR650R, you'd be correct. At six-foot-one, the XR doesn't feel that large to me. I like it in the fast sections and on the tight trails. The XR is, in fact, sitting in my garage.

—Karel Kramer/6'1"/185 lb/B rider

On faster, more open sections of trail you can expect to see a good rider leading other more exotic four-strokes with the Honda XR650R. When the trail is so tight that there is no flow or rhythm to it, you feel the weight of the bike. Still, for its intended arena, the XR is awesome.

KAREL KRAMER

The new XR is a huge improvement from the 600. The bike feels big, and it is, but the ride is very well-mannered. The rigid alloy chassis keeps the wheels tracking true, and it looks cool. The suspension is a little on the firm side and works best when you're riding the XR hard. The conventional-style fork feels fine, but did twist on me once without my crashing. The best component on the bike is the motor—it pulls smoothly from bottom to top and packs major berm-blasting power. The power is very easy to control. The XR has a nifty centrifugal compression release that makes the engine jump-start just like a two-stroke. My only complaint about the motor is the super-low first gear, which makes it hard to control the bike at lower speeds because of the huge gap to second gear.

As usual the brakes and other controls are great, and Honda quality is still there. The major factor holding the XR back in feel and performance is weight, because 300 pounds is still 300 pounds, even if it is a good-feeling 300 pounds. This bike is one that feels better the more you ride it. The XR650R would be the first bike I would slap a semi-street-legal kit on and use to explore the mining and jeep roads near my home in Colorado. The couchlike seat and large size would keep me comfortable. The Honda is a quality machine with a good motor and it's a good value, but it is a bit hefty and cumbersome for tight, technical trail riding.

—Greg Herbold/6'/180 lb/Expert off-road rider

When I first got on the Honda, I just got off the KTM, and the red bike didn't feel good since the ergonomics are so different from a European bike. Then later I rode a longer session on the 650 and I liked it fine. This bike is *sooo* much better than the older 600. I still have an XR600R with about \$10,000 dumped into it. The stock 650 feels better. As much as I liked the Husaberg and the KTM, I'd spend my own money on the XR.

—John Phillips/6'2"/200 lb/Expert

It only took the first two miles of fast roads to realize the XR650R has a need for speed. The bike might feel a little heavy, but its stability is unmatched when I had to slide the thing around 40-mph turns. My confidence was high while entering the grass-track area littered with holes and dropouts. Seconds later my feet were over my head when I slammed the bottom of a three-foot



24HR

and even with the superior Honda brakes, it was a handful to stop in a hurry.

No question that our bigger testers who favor the wide-open West loved the bike, but in the tighter, more technical sections, lighter riders reached less favorable opinions.

Surprisingly, the only test bike to have a clutch problem was the 650. It broke a fiber plate, burned up the rest of the plates and had to be replaced. In first gear, the bike would just dig a hole in the ground, so pulling up a steep hill was usually done in second with slipping of the clutch. After the test, we installed a 52-tooth sprocket in place of the stock 48. That's a huge change but it was much, much better on tight trails. In fairness, though, not only had our test bike already taken a lot of punishment before the 24-Hour, but it did not get a new clutch—this most likely won't be an issue on production units.

drop at speed. I looked around to make sure no one was looking and realized the XR is not made to be ridden like a motocross bike in stock form. Being tall, the XR is as tough to ride through the really tight stuff as other riders commented. The engine is powerful and could chug its way up nasty hills and technical sections. In comparison, the XR shined over the KTM and the Husaberg on the fast roads but lost points in the motocross and tight stuff. For trail riding and fast, long races like the Best In the Desert series, I could easily own one of the new Honda XR650s, plus the price is right.

—Scott Hoffman/6'1"/195 lb/Vet Intermediate MXer, off-road ability still up for discussion

Conga Line Comments

Of the 12 testers who rode the bike, five chose it first, and the remaining seven chose it second behind the KTM 520.

Ray Gibbs/5'10"/200 lb/Expert/owns YZ426F: There is no substitute for cubic inches. Put it in third, and throw away the lever. I thought this thing was going to be an overweight pork-belly, but it turns out to be one of the best all-around off-road machines that I have ever ridden. Cushy. Torquey. Steers. Stops. Sign me up.

Eric Featherston/5'9"/180 lb/Intermediate/owns KTM 300: Honda wins a gold medal with this bike. There isn't a hill you can't climb with a motor like this. I could ride this bike anywhere. It would be my first pick for a long, long ride.

Keith Mertz/6'2"/195 lb/Expert/owns XR600R, RM250: The XR is still in a class of its own. It's not a whip-it-and-flip-it bike like the others.

Glenn Sizemore/5'10"/190 lb/Expert/owns RM250: Great power all over. Engine acts like a brake. Easy to start and has a smooth transmission. You can feel the weight in the turns and stopping.

Jim Dranow/5'10"/175 lb/Novice/owns CR250R: My next bike.

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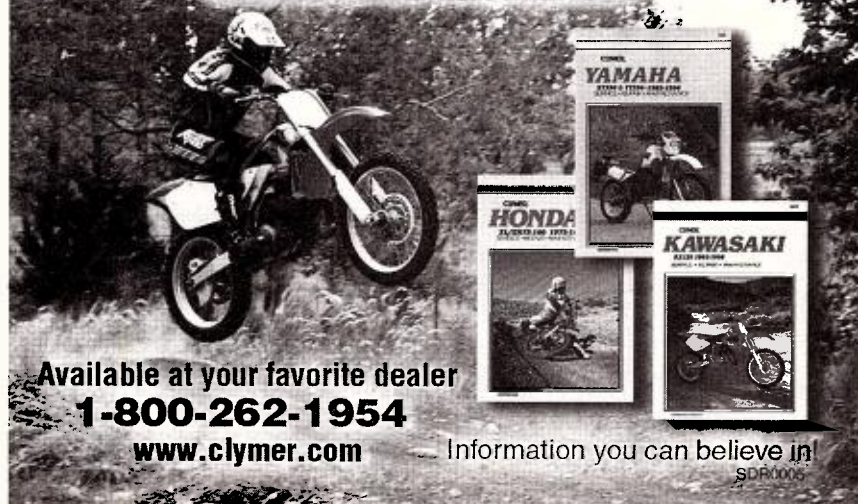
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JUST PUT ME BACK ON MY BINE

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AT THE FINISH LINE

I WORK FOR A LIVING BUT RACING IS WHAT I REALLY DO

CAUTION
DANGEROUS RIDER

PJ1 RACING

BEARAY

STOCK

SHOYA P

YES ITS FAST. NO YOU CAN'T RIDE IT!

MY OTHER BIE IS FASTER

KEEP UP... OR MOVE OVER!

MOTOCROSS

SHUT UP

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

BELL

2nd Place Option !!!

I USE HONDAS FOR TRACTION.

WILD CHILD

OR SHUT UP

BORN & BRED TO RIP & SHRED

FEEL THE POWER

WILL RACE FOR BEER!

ADRENALINE RUSH!

BONEHEAD

D.I.D.

GIRL POWER

FASTER THAN A SPEEDING TICKET

300 FEET

LIFE WITHOUT RACING IS NO LIFE AT ALL!

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WHAT ARE YOU STICK ON STUPID?

SPEED LIMIT 200

I DON'T KNOW DON'T CARE

JR RBBN SIDE ROWNL

CAUTION: RIDER MAY ROOST AT ANY TIME

TURN THE GAS ON DUMMY

mother's worry

YOU WANT TO EAT DIRT GET BEHIND ME!

Nothing to it But to do it!

KEEP THE TROPHY GIVE ME THE GIRL

FOR Competition USE ONLY

BLOW CHUNKS

WILD WIG

INSANE RICK

LUNATIC

BEEN THERE

WON THAT

Racing BRAKES ARE FOR WUSSY'S

PSYCHO BIKE

FAST

POWERED BY GORE'S

I HATE WHEN THAT HAPPENS

YOU ONLY DIE ONCE

NO CRYBABIES ALLOWED

BAD BOYZ FAST TOYZ

FASTER BIKES GET BIGGER TROPHIES

BONELESS

when in doubt GAS IT!

KILL THE COMPETITION!

"RACE FOREVER" (WORK WHENEVER) GO FASTER

DRIVE HARDER BRAKE DEEPER GO FASTER

THIS DIRT IS FOR YOU!

MEAN PEOPLE KICK ASS!

MICHELIN SCOTT

RK

LIFE IS SHORT! RIDE HARD!

KAYABA

SMITH

Moto!

CAUTION

NGK

DUNLOP

I'M THE PERSON YOUR MOTHER WARNED YOU ABOUT

LAUGHY NATURE

Life Goes Fast... HAVE A BLAST!

DOES NOT RACE WELL WITH OTHERS

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HUSABERG FE600E

The FE600E is the subject of major evolutionary refinement by the Swedish development team. The engine looks like a rehash, but new centercases and a new balance shaft, crankshaft and head basically make it a new engine. The rest of the chassis and the whole package is dramatically improved. Previous engine reliability problems have been worked on, especially in the valve train area. More durable valve seat material and stronger valve adjusters should make this engine more or less trouble-free. Improved construction of the balance shaft, crankshaft and electric-start gear wheel have eliminated other potential problem areas while reducing vibration levels coming from the engine. The engine power is very strong and, combined with a six-speed transmission, will propel any rider easily from zero to over 100 mph. Last year's bike suffered from less than perfect carburetion, but with the new ignition, header pipes and model-specific jetting on the 40mm Del'Orto carburetor we found throttle response and jetting consistency from day to night and overall settings to be spot-on.

According to Husaberg's resident guru and former national champion motocrosser Chuck Sun, they received the bike with no time to check the setup, and it showed in the suspension performance. Most testers said the fork felt low and harsh at the same time, transmitting a lot of feeling to the rider. The rear suspension consistently felt high, sliding the rider forward



Guy Cooper could jump a wheelbarrow, but the Husaberg FE600E is another bike that has not forgotten its motocross heritage. The engine is a fairly long-stroke design by modern standards (the 501 shares the same bore), so the power feels more classic-thumper than other Husabergs.

onto the gas tank. The result was that the bike felt a little heavy in the front, but brought a solid and planted feeling to the steering. The downside was a lack of high-speed stability, especially when braking and entering a choppy turn. Fit and finish, while noticeably improved from previous years, are still not quite up to either the KTM or Honda. A broken battery-box ground strap killed the battery, and thus the electric start, for an hour or so, about three hours into the test. And while the brakes, clutch and throttle action were acceptable, a funky ignition switch and confusing start/kill switch reminded us this bike was built by a group who wanted to do it their way.

WHAT'S NEW

- Future-shock styling
- Chassis changes same as FE400's (see page 44)
- 600-specific ignition, jetting and head pipes
- New construction of crankshaft for less vibration
- New construction of balance shaft
- New construction of electric-start gear wheel for more reliability

WHAT'S HOT!

- More competitive price at \$7798
- Acceptably low vibration level
- Improved reliability and durability
- Strong bottom, mid and top power
- Electric start
- Much more solid-feeling chassis
- Easy left-side kickstarting if required
- Solid, planted feeling in front end

WHAT'S NOT!

- Unrefined fit and finish compared to KTM and Honda
- Stink-bug feel
- Headshake on deceleration
- More vibration than KTM or Honda
- Suspension action harsh with front end feeling low
- Price still very high in class
- Michelin tires wear well but offer meager traction

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OPINIONS

Even though the FE600E has a big, butt-high look, it actually fits a smaller rider well. The controls were pretty comfortable, but the suspension was not. The fork transmitted a lot through my arms, and the rear shock was way too stiff, even on the lightest compression-damping setting. More setup time would have helped. Power was very strong all through the rev band, but with a lot more flywheel feel than the KTM. In addition, while the overall ready-to-go, tank-full weight of 285 was high compared to the KTM, as long as the electric start worked it was OK. Overall I rate it number two behind the KTM because of its funkiness, suspension settings and weight problems.

—Dick Burleson

The Husaberg was probably my favorite. It felt the most like a motocrosser. The magic button was awesome. Two guys squidded out in front of me on a hill, so I went in between them, hit a bush and fell down. I was thinking, "Here we go." Then I hit the starter. Cool.

—John Phillips

I enjoyed riding Husabergs in the past, and this year was no different. The 2000 plastic may be sporting some strange shapes, but the 'Berg fits me perfectly and it has no loose or protruding objects to snag my gear. Unlike the Honda or KTM, the bar, seat and footpegs are all in the right place for me. The 'Berg has big, torquey, traditional power that demands respect from the pilot. The engine builds power over the complete rpm range. This is a very fast motorcycle. Another thing you feel is the engine vibration. The electric start is not as fast or solid as the stellar KTM system. The strong attribute of the FE600 is the chassis, which is stable, predictable, light feeling and easy to control at all speeds regardless of terrain. Cornering is exceptional, and the suspension performs well once tuned to the rider's preference. The powerful brakes are way better than last year's, yet the rear is still touchy. Overall the 'Berg has the best-mannered chassis of the bunch and is easy to ride, but I wish I could get mine with the KTM motor and Chuck Sun as my new next door neighbor.

—Greg Herbold

I was surprised by how much I liked to ride the FE600; the engine developed good performance, and the bike felt pretty light. The front wheel was more stable and had a firmer feel on the ground compared to the KTM. The electric start is a god-send if the bike stalls on a steep hill or trail. My biggest complaint was being able to feel when the engine was between gears while riding in tight, technical sections. Second gear was too high and did not allow me to chug up technical hills, and first gear was too low and the bike had to be rewed too high. The suspension was plush, although it did not handle sudden dips in the trail well. The Husaberg has no true faults, but I don't know if I would buy one over the bulletproof Honda XR or the full off-road racer KTM.

—Scott Hoffman

Give this baby some room, because it loves to stretch its legs. The FE600 is fast, handles well, and is modestly suspended. Tranny specs keep it from being a good bike for the nasty tight, twisty stuff that eastern riders crave, but it would be a good desert machine for the boys out West. My main concern is still parts availability. Although it's gotten a lot better, I've heard from readers that it can be difficult to get parts in a hurry from the manufacturer, and there are not a lot of aftermarket options. This alone would put it behind the KTM and Honda in my book.

—Ken Faught/5'10"/195 lb/Expert

Conga Line Comments

Note: These boys rode all night on a shortened, less technical course. Twelve riders rode all three big-bores during that time. Most in this group are serious play riders in their 30s and 40s and most are relatively big guys. Two rated the bike second, all the rest rated it third.



There is no difference in size or weight between the KTM 400 and 520, so the bike remains nimble and purposeful on the trail, but the engine feels as though it makes 25 to 50 percent more power everywhere in the rpm range.

GARTH MILAN

Ray Gibbs: Runs like a lightweight 600cc bike should. Stable in top gear. Screams, good brakes, but not as plush as its orange cousin. It was also a notchy shifter, reluctant on the first to second shift.

Tom Burgess/6'2"/210 lb/Expert/owns YZ400F: Super power from bottom all the way to top. Shifting was a little tacky, but I think it had something to do with the clutch.

Mark Getzfrid/6'6"/250 lb/A rider/owns XR650L, KTM 300 M/XC: Handling reminded me of an '83/'84 XR500 (that's good). The bike likes to be ridden way forward. Compared to older 'Bergs, this one has way less flex, good brakes, good handlebar-seat-footpeg position and the motor from hell. A blast to ride. Fun factor of 10.

John Bumgarner/6'1"/185 lb/Expert/owns CR250R, XR600R, BSA 500: Good motor. It revs to the moon and makes power all the way to the top. Not as meaty as the XR650R. Clutch engagement is poor and there's no freeplay; it's either on or off. Great lever pressure; it's smooth. Not enough stopping power for the motor. The holes in the gas tank louvers hung up knee braces. The front end was deflecting off everything; the rear was good.



GARTH MILAN

You don't have to be as talented as Mike Laferty to have a blast playing on the KTM 520. The bike is distilled fun. The combination of big power and a nimble chassis always remains easy to ride. It rarely bullies the rider.

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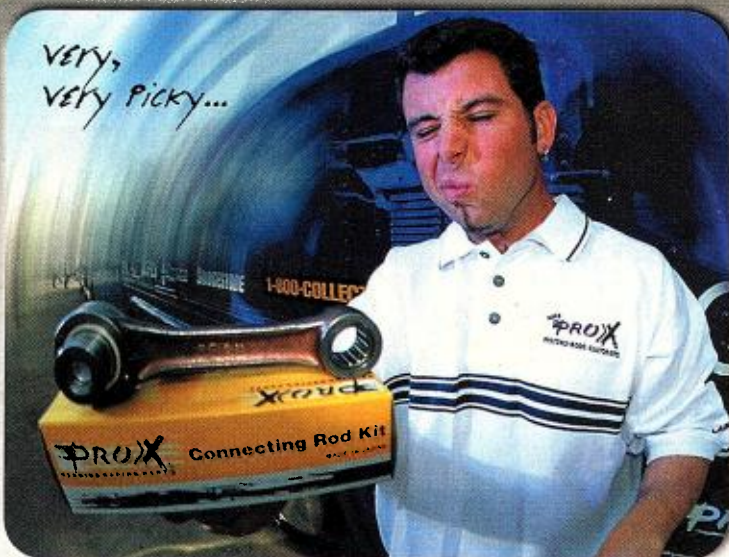
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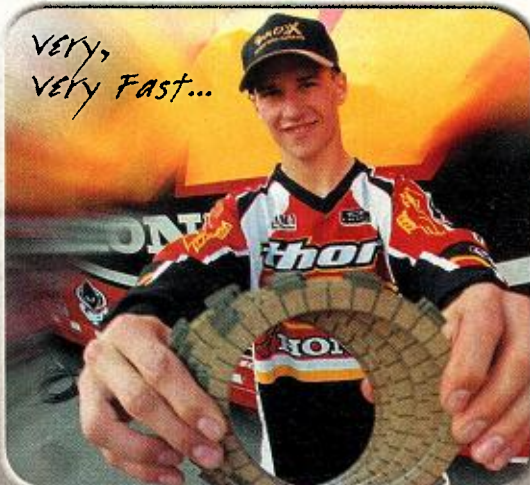
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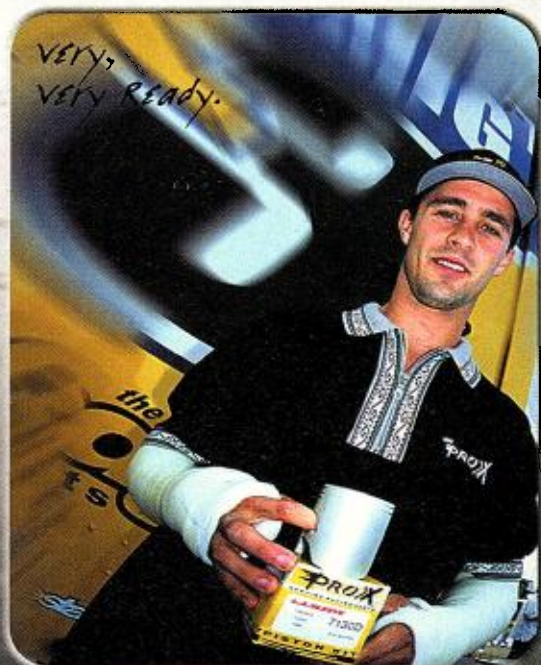


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KTM 520 E/XC

KTM made a special point to tell both us and its dealer network that the new 520 E/XC (as well as the 400 E/XC, and both SX versions of these new-generation machines) are designed for racing. For dual-purpose and street use, the Austrian company sells the LC4 motor wanting to make sure that the RFS machines are for the "highest level of competition" and are sold to the right customer. Its reasons? There is a small oil volume, no cushion in the clutch and the taller gears are thinner. Whereas Honda is trying to make one bike for all, KTM is making one bike for serious off-road riders and another for not-so-serious off-road and street use. That's why the 520 E/XC is electric start and 30 pounds lighter. Just as Yamaha made a corporate decision to build and sell a full-on four-stroke MX weapon in '98, KTM has joined the bandwagon for 2000 and built this RFS machine. The motor creates huge power, with a quick, revvy character that demands attention. And the new chassis duplicates the two-stroke model's handling traits, with a thinner profile to boot. The chassis is new to the four-stroke line, but not new to the company's two-stroke line. The all-up, full-tank weight is not a great deal different than a KTM two-stroke E/XC either. The 520 feels slim, light and changes direction effortlessly while the rider is standing. Changing direction quickly in tighter sections while sitting is a little more directly related to a correct rear shock setting. The relationship between any KTM off-road bike and its motocross brethren is extremely close, so the 520 is a willing leaper and will bump and jump through rough terrain like a converted motocrosser.

At the same time, the suspension has settings inside that are off-road plush, competition plush at race speeds with the clickers dialed up a little and sit-down plush if they are backed off. The moto connection doesn't mean the KTM is not well-equipped for off-road use either. It has a fairly quiet muffler that walks the line between political correctness and all-out performance quite nicely. Thank the FIM for that. Bikes in the World Enduro Championships have to meet strict sound levels, so European companies are motivated to build fast and quiet exhaust systems. There is also a built-in spark arrestor, lights and a resettable odometer.

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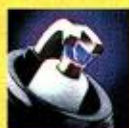
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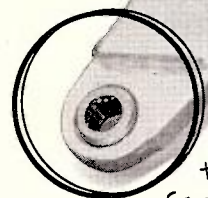
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quiet, only the rabid will want more power than what the stock bike makes, and no one really *needs* more than the KTM makes.

Don't underestimate the potential of the machine; it is designed for racing purposes and will do just that, with gusto. The 400 is already the world champ and the 520 missed out by a tiny margin—it is second in the world in the over-500cc four-stroke class.

It will be a winner in the U.S. as well. Count on it.

OPINIONS

OK, so now we're talking. Hit the button and go. I turned it upside down at night, on a hill, and killed it dead with gas drooling. I stood it up, hit the button and took off. No sweat. That's what it's about, no sweat. Plus, in stock trim mind you, it's a rocket ship with huge mid boost. The ergos are excellent, the throttle super easy (I love that), the vibration is low and the low-rpm delivery is less chuggy than the XR. The front end was a little dancy because the rear preload was too low, but the bike was too much fun to ride to stop and take the time to adjust it. It felt like a 125 compared to the XR, and still scary-fast. Gas it at any speed, and the front end claws the sky. Yee haw! This is the bike that the Husaberg guys wanted to make originally. The best four-stroke I've ever ridden, and easily one of the three best motorcycles ever. Wonder what kind of trade-in I can get for a Ford van with 325,000 miles? I love progress.

—Dick (no matter what I say, I won't get one)
Burleson

KTM did its homework and the 520 actually feels like a two-stroke until you twist back your right hand, then major boost lifts up the front wheel like no two-stroke I know of. The new engine has impressive low-end power, then revs quickly into a controlled midrange which is followed by a killer top-end boost. It is very easy to use and effective. It revs fast. The motor is vibration free, and has the magic button on the right handlebar, which makes it easy to sneak out of camp while the others kick and flog. The only things I wonder about the engine are the long-term reliability, the vulnerable-looking centercases and the small oil volume. The KTM is the lightest-feeling big-bore I have tested and does not tire the rider. The suspension worked pretty well, but the bike is very sensitive to rear shock preload, which is key to getting the front end to stick in corners. The new Brembo brakes are very powerful, but the rear is pretty on/off and lacks control. Overall the KTM is a very impressive entry into the market and makes a guy think twice about an over-400cc machine for hard-core off-road use. With the same claimed weight as the KTM 400, the 520 offers more power, and who wouldn't want that? Get the thing to turn like a YZ or WR, and it's an easy sell for me. Without a doubt, this is not your granddaddy's BSA, but it costs a lot more.

—Greg Herbold

After testing the 520 motocrosser, I was elated to take a spin on the E/XC model. I quickly realized that the E/XC was very much an off-road bike, electric start and all. I was scared to open the bike up in sixth gear down the first fast section. First was the fact I believe the thing would have pulled three digits if it had a speedo, plus the front wheel felt really light and not planted firm enough to feel confident at high speed. A steering damper would be a must if I were to ride a lot of high-speed stuff. Power was excellent, although I felt the gearbox ratio was a little too close and I had to shift more than I really wanted to. The 520 E/XC felt very light and easy to throw around, no matter what part of the course I was on. It was hard to believe I was riding a big-bore thumper when I blitzed through really tight switchbacks down hills with ease. Katoom is my pick to click if I had to choose one off-road race bike—that is with the addition of a steering damper.

—Scott Hoffman

Continued on page 150

WHAT'S NEW

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- Aluminum swingarm with multiadjustment chain system
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- Limited availability



MARK KARIYA

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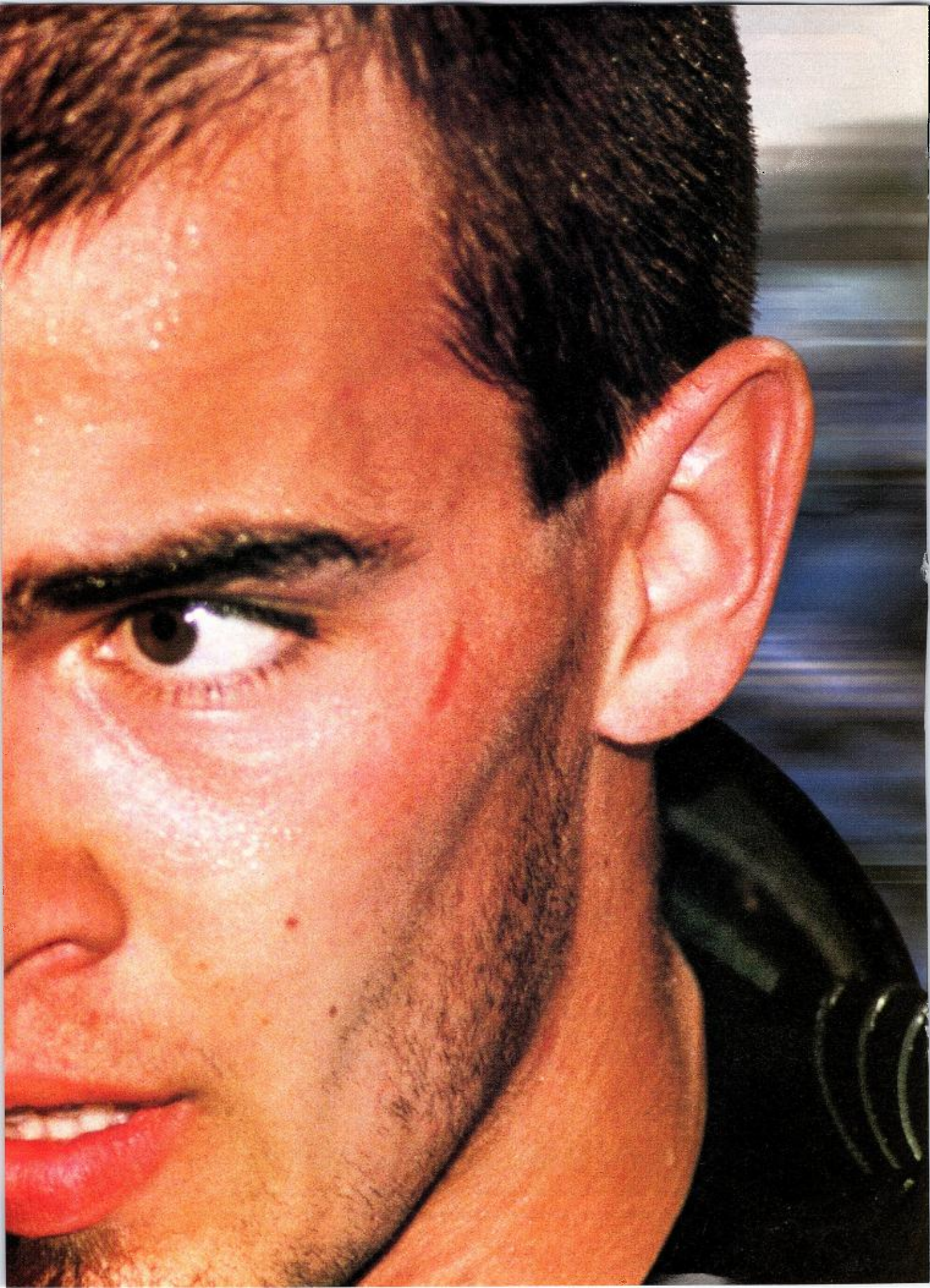
Can David Vuillemin take on
Jeremy McGrath?

McGrath may still be King, but there is one Frenchman who is desperately bidding for the crown.



125 WEST: Five different races, five different winners

125 EAST: Pastrana shakes things up at Indy, but loses



the **cobra** david vuillemin



motol



CRUEL

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EVERYONE
WANTS A
PIECE OF
McGRATH,
EVEN THE
125 GUYS!
By Ken Faught

Jeremy McGrath must feel like a man with a giant bull's-eye on his back. Everyone (including 125cc riders) has been taking shots at him, and the seven-time champ hasn't felt this much pressure since the infamous battle between him and arch rival Jeff Emig in '97.

A lot of commotion has to do with one rider in particular—Frenchman David Vuillemin. The Cobra—as he's been tagged—managed to win two consecutive races and passed McGrath fair and square pulling off the biggest upset in years at one of the greatest races of all-time. It frustrated McGrath, eliminated his chances of winning the Vans Triple Crown and forced him to regroup. Ricky Carmichael has also started to come on strong. Better late than never, the three-time 125cc outdoor champ is finally adapting to the big bikes and should be able to grab a win before long. It's been an awesome season so far, and nothing at all has been predictable.

WILD CHILD: David Vuillemin doesn't have the same polished riding style as his American counterparts, but he definitely has the speed. The Frenchman is the first rider since Sébastien Tortelli to catch and pass Jeremy McGrath while the champ was in the lead. The last time MC got pushed out of the lead was at the 1999 AMA 250cc National at Glen Helen. The Cobra is for real! *KEN FAUGHT*

INTENTIONS

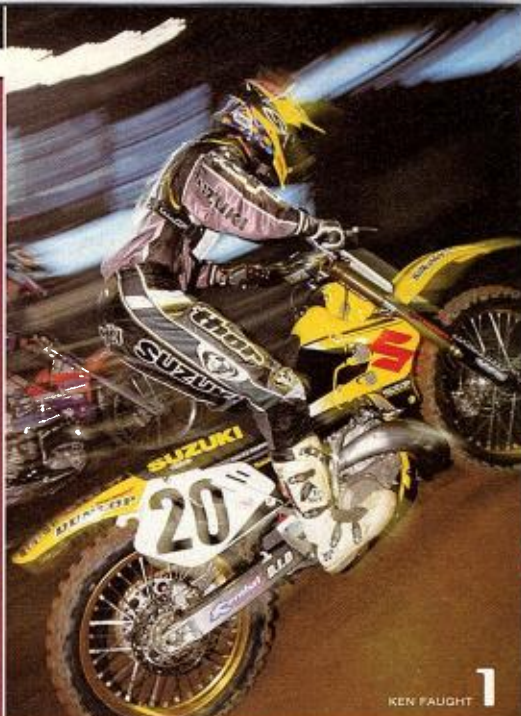
1 VICTIM OF HIS OWN SUCCESS: Motivation seems to be Damon Huffman's biggest downfall. It's been a long time since people have called him a child prodigy or the next big thing to supercross. Some will argue that he would be much better if he bulked up and took training more seriously. Others feel that his two 125cc Western Region championships came too easily, and he's never had to work hard to maintain factory rider status.

2 MIND GAMES: Honda's Kevin Windham has had a difficult time thus far convincing himself that he can win. Sources close to K-Dub say that it's a mental barrier that is currently keeping him from being a contender. With teammate Lusk injured, Windham should be giving Jeremy McGrath and David Vuillemin a good fight every weekend, but that hasn't happened just yet.

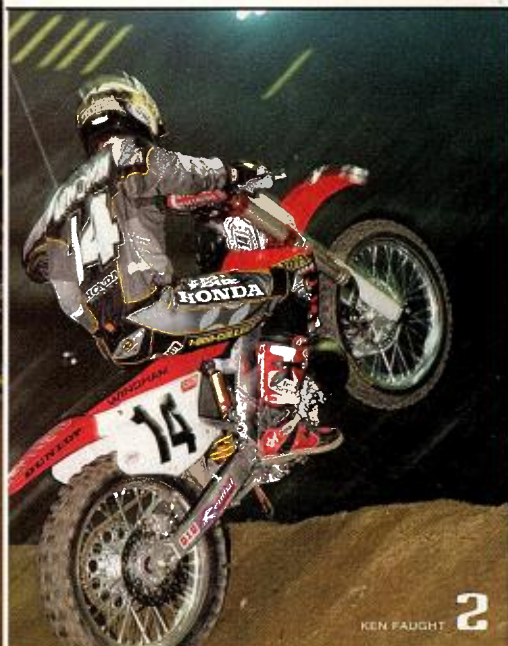
3 MAKING PROGRESS: Mike LaRocco has improved his starts, allowing him to make a serious chase after the title. He's fast, but McGrath and Vuillemin are a little quicker at this point in the series.

4 WHEN SLOW IS FAST: Ricky Carmichael has calmed down a lot, and he's been rewarded with his lifetime best results. He podiumed back-to-back races in Phoenix and Houston, but is still looking for his first win. Give it time, and it will come. Congrats Ricky on finding the one thing that's been holding you back in the 250cc class!

5 NUMBER ONE FOR A REASON: After back-to-back losses to Vuillemin, ignorant critics said that McGrath's reign may be over, but don't be fooled. Bad luck was the culprit. Even though Vuillemin appears to be McGrath's first title challenger since Jeff Emig, King MC has still won four of the first six races.



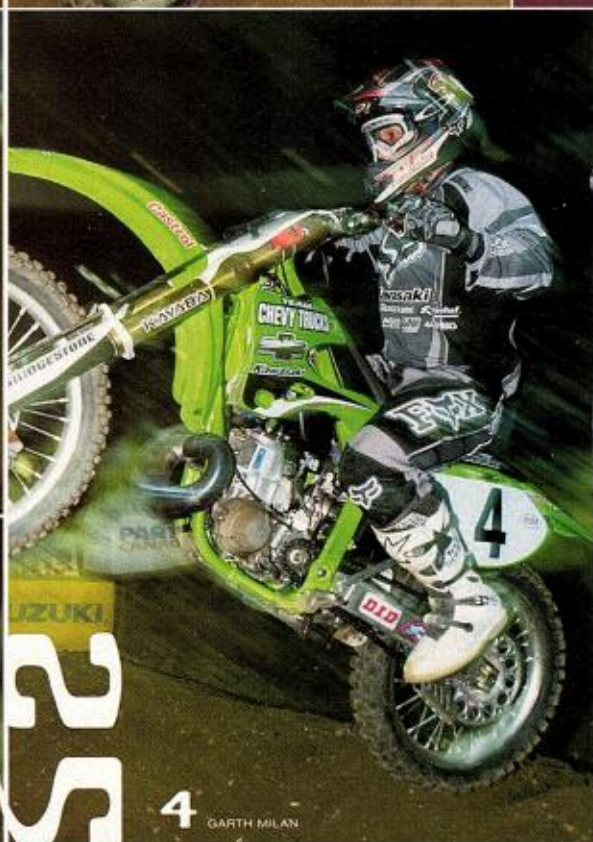
KEN FAUGHT 1



KEN FAUGHT 2



GARTH MILAN 3

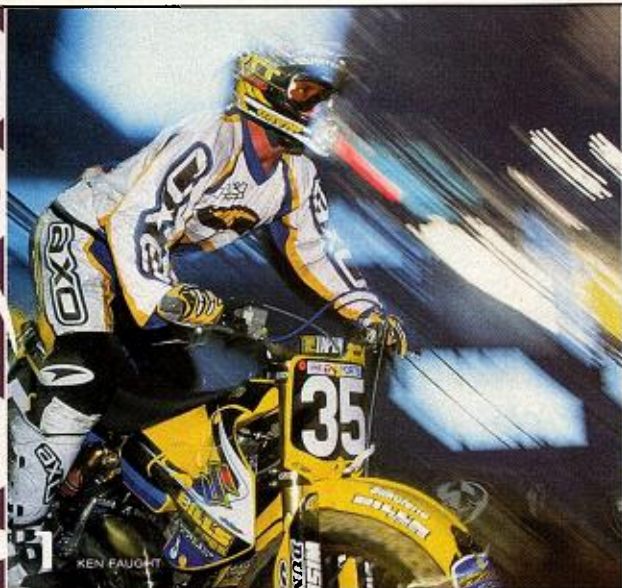


GARTH MILAN 4

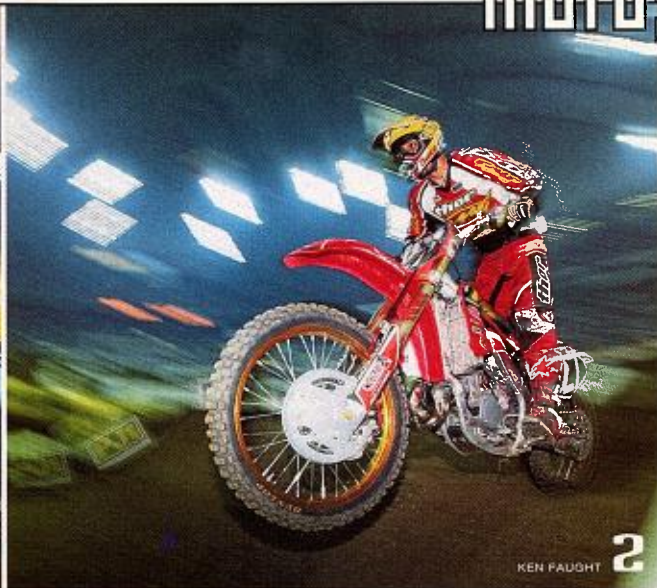


KEN FAUGHT 5

250cc



KEN FAUGHT



KEN FAUGHT

2

1 SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST: David Pingree kicked off the season with a win, and then "enjoyed" a lot of bad luck. Despite several nasty crashes, the Suzuki rider should win the championship since most of the preseason favorites are sidelined with injuries.

2 WINNER TAKES ALL: The Eastern Region kickoff was one of the most anticipated races of the season, and Team FMF/Honda's Michael Brandes struck gold. He holeshot the 15-lap main event and walked away from the pack as guys like Travis Pastrana, Stéphane Roncada, Ernesto Fonseca and Nathan Ramsey struggled to stay on two wheels.

3 LIL' McGRATH: Ernesto Fonseca is to Jeremy McGrath what Mini-Me is to Austin Powers. Fonseca is laid-back, confident, determined and, most important, a technician on the racetrack. His eighth place at Indy doesn't reflect his true speed or McGrath-like riding style, but that will most certainly change in the races to come.



3

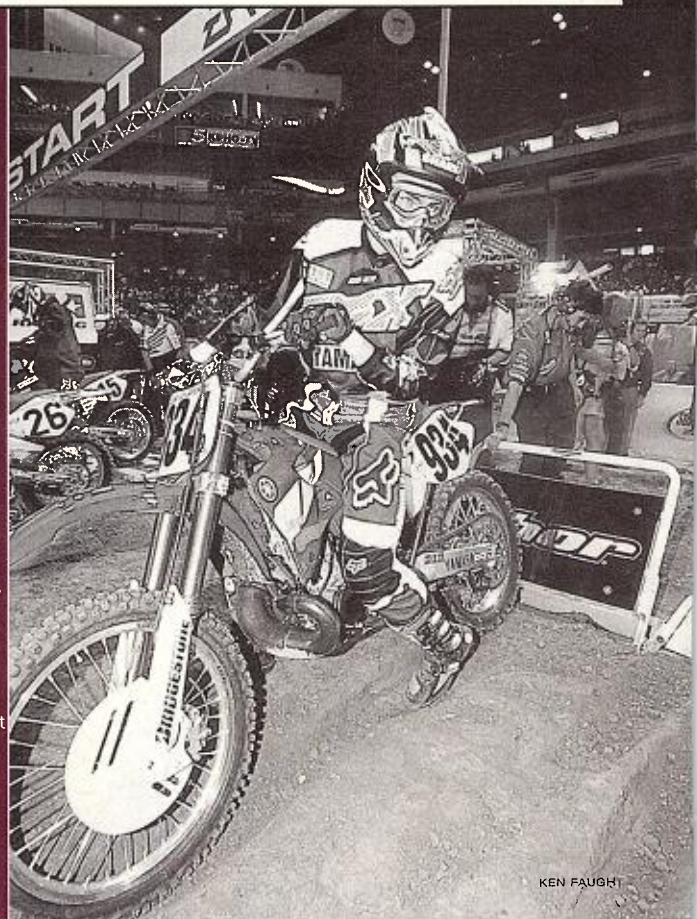
KEN FAUGHT

McGRATH VS. VUILLEMIN: EIGHT REASONS HIS LOSS IN PHOENIX DOESN'T MEAN A THING

After the race, Jeremy McGrath said he hasn't been that disappointed in himself in a long time. If anything was going to get his attention, it would be a foreigner with a funky riding style beating him at the sport he's dominated since '93. Hey, the guy is human! But what seemed to get McGrath the most is how it affected all the hype which turned from Jeremy's going-to-do-it-again to his championship-reign-might-be-over.

Make no mistake, Vuillemin is for real. He's got the speed, the determination and, most important, the heart. He's a guy who lived in a garage just a few years ago so he could leave France and race in the United States. He wants to be the best, but by no means does it mean that McGrath has lost his touch. To put things into perspective, we took a pit survey of expert race watchers to see what they thought about the upset. When all was said and done, we came up with this list of eight reasons MC's loss really doesn't mean anything when it comes to the future of his career.

1. Builders made the course in Phoenix relatively easy after many riders complained that the tracks were getting too tough. Track design really became an issue when Jimmy Button suffered a nasty crash the week earlier in San Diego. Remember, the easier the track, the faster the rest of the pack.
2. David Vuillemin was out to prove to the world that he can beat Jeremy McGrath in heads-up competition. He had something to prove, Jeremy didn't.
3. Tim Ferry was fighting hard in hopes of producing his first stadium win since leaving 125s. Ferry held up McGrath longer than he did Vuillemin. Ferry essentially lost a lot of his fight and energy once McGrath took control of the race.
4. The race didn't mean as much as the championship. Remember, to McGrath, it was going to be just another victory, kinda like just another home run to Mark McGwire.
5. A major communication blunder may have been the root of the problem. McGrath says he didn't realize that Vuillemin was actually catching him and was upset his mechanic Randy Lawrence did not give better pitboard signs.
6. Jimmy Button's injury was weighing heavily on McGrath's mind the entire week before Phoenix. Remember, MC and Button-Fly are really good friends, and Jeremy let Jimmy live with him for a while at his old home in Canyon Lake, California. Serious injuries have a way of negatively influencing motivation, even for a champ like McGrath.
7. Jeremy isn't accustomed to someone catching him in a race. McGrath says he was startled to see Vuillemin so close. "I had just lapped Larry Ward and thought



KEN FAUGHT

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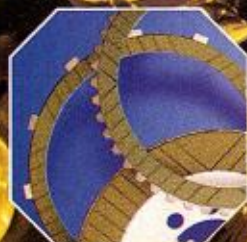
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he was trying to match my pace," said McGrath immediately after the main event. "Some guys think that makes them look cool after a bad race. Then I saw that it was Vuillemin. I wasn't expecting him to be there, especially on the last lap. I'm not used to having someone else out there being able to run race pace for 20 laps." Most of his competition wears out easily, and his normal strategy has worked just fine up until



this point. He's made some adjustments to his routine and vows to never let it happen again.

8. Jeremy was on full cruise control and mentally had already won the race. He was just watching the laps run down and riding conservatively to chase after the \$500,000 Van's Triple Crown bonus.



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motocross

TRAVIS PASTRANA: MOTOCROSSER, FREESTYLER —OR BOTH?

You've seen him on David Letterman and watched him in the Gravity Games and the X-Games. Now, 16-year-old Travis has finally come of age to race supercross. His hard-charging style, impressive speed and raw energy are sure to add a lot of excitement in the 125cc class, and will no doubt scare some of the top 250 riders. Unquestionably, this kid is one of the most popular riders in the world and clearly represents the future of our sport.

DR: You've had a phenomenal freestyle and amateur motocross career. How do you plan on carrying that success on to the supercross track against the best racers in the world?

TP: Well, I've been doing freestyle for a while now and have had a lot of fun doing it, but my goal since I was four years old was to do well as a racer. I have the opportunity to do that this year with a full factory ride from American Suzuki, so I couldn't ask for anything better. I have a lot of confidence coming into the series, as I've ridden against guys like Ernesto Fonseca all of my life. It will be my first-ever pro series, though, so I'm sure it will also be a learning experience.

There have been a lot of rumors about Suzuki and other sponsors banning you from freestyle competitions. Is there any truth to these statements, and how do you feel about the matter?

Well, at first, everyone wanted to put that in my contract, but I've worked out a deal with the factory. They basically said they don't want me to do freestyle, but they won't put it in my contract that I can't do it. I understand that if I am in serious contention for a series championship, doing the jump contests wouldn't be a good idea. But Suzuki wants to support me in whatever I do, so I think they will stick by my decisions. They realize that I love having fun, jumping and learning new tricks, and I believe that the jumping skills will carry over to supercross. I don't have a set freestyle schedule yet, but the only competition I will probably compete in this year will be the X-Games.

Tell us about your preseason thumb injury. How did it happen, and will it affect your performance during the first few rounds?

It happened at McGrath's practice track. I landed wrong off of a jump I



PRESSURE COOKER: 16-year-old Travis Pastrana's arrival on the supercross scene has been the most anticipated in years. His popularity as the sport's premier freestyle rider has made him a household name among supercross purists. During his first-ever Pace supercross, he fell on the parade lap while attempting a Superman Air, and then crashed twice in the main. He's got the speed, but he needs to settle down. According to sources, the AMA talked about black-flagging Pastrana for aggressive riding after he triple-jumped onto the back fender of Brock Sellards.

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could have done on my bicycle, and the front end washed. I high-sided into the next corner and wound up breaking the middle joint in my thumb, on the outside. It was put into a cast two weeks ago, and here I am at the races! I haven't been able to ride more than two days in the two weeks since it happened, but I feel confident coming into this race, regardless. I will say now, though, that however I finish has nothing to do with my cast.

What are your goals this season? Will you use this rookie year as a learning season, or are you ready to fight for the championship?

Well, both. This rookie season will definitely be a year of learning for me. One thing I have to learn to do is keep the bike on two wheels. Even in my first qualifier today I went down doing something stupid. I have to learn to be a little smarter, and not push it to the point where I have a chance of crashing. I also have to learn to not be the first one to do every jump on the track, even though I have a lot of fun doing that! I have to stay healthy for the whole year and stay on two wheels. I think I have a serious shot at the championship, but it's going to be tough.

The 125 East is set to be one of the toughest ever. Which guys have what it takes to win the championship?

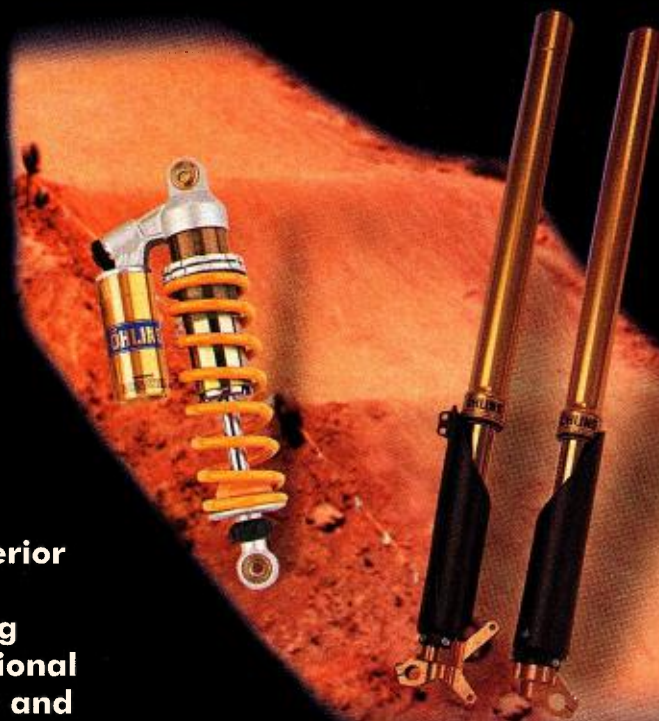
Everyone looks at the 125 class as a step down from the speed of the 250 class, but I really don't feel that this is true. The top 10 guys are amazing! There will be a lot of fast guys, but I'm going to have to say that Ernesto Fonseca is the biggest threat, along with his teammate Stéphane Roncada. But again, there are so many fast racers this year that we won't know until it's all over.

Continued on page 100



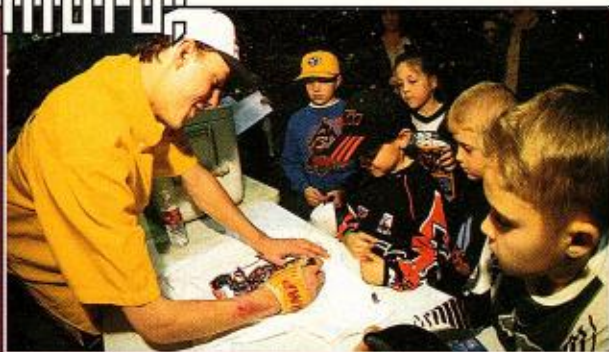
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Continued from page 99

DR: Throughout your career you've been known as a jumper, and everyone has been anticipating your arrival onto the supercross circuit. How do you feel, though, about the Nationals, and will you contest them all?
TP: I will definitely ride the whole outdoor season, and I am really looking forward to it. It is going to be a long year, and a great learning experience for me. I do feel a little more confident in supercross, as it's kind of my domain. I like the bigger jumps indoors, and I have fun because of all the creativity involved in supercross. The outdoors will be tons of fun as well, but I expect they will be a lot tougher, with guys like Tallon Vohland who really go fast on the National tracks.

You've had some serious injuries. Do they have an affect on your mental state in supercross, and do you plan on riding the season conservatively or aggressively?

That's a tough question, but I'd have to say the injuries don't really affect me too much now. I've unfortunately been through so many now that I have just learned to accept them as part of racing. You get injured bad enough, you take a vacation; it's as simple as that. Right now I have a broken thumb, but I don't feel that it will bother me at all. I feel really strong out there. As for my racing strategy, I plan on riding conservatively, but you never know. I just want to go out and finish top-five. Of course, a podium finish would be nice, but top-five is still in the championship hunt, and that's the important thing. However, knowing how I am, if I'm in second place with a lap to go, I don't want to push it over the edge, and I'm going to try my hardest not to—but it will definitely be an exercise in restraint!

JIMMY BUTTON'S ROAD TO RECOVERY

Racing fans suffered a disastrous blow at the third round of the AMA/EA Sports Supercross series in San Diego when Team Yamaha's Jimmy Button was carried off in an ambulance after a hard practice crash. Initial reports of Button being unable to move his limbs had many fearing paralysis, but the final report from doctors confirmed that Button is not paralyzed.

X-rays revealed that last year's Washougal National winner tore the anterior and posterior ligaments in his neck and bruised his spinal cord at the C-3 vertebra. He was immediately hospitalized at Sharp's Medical Center in San Diego, where steroids were administered. After a little more than a week there, Button was transferred to Scottsdale, Arizona's Health South Meridian Point Rehab Hospital to be closer to his family.

At press time, Button was doing extremely well and had feeling and movement everywhere, although he is still unable to stand or walk on his own. He will remain at the rehab center for an estimated two to six months, according to a nurse at the facility.

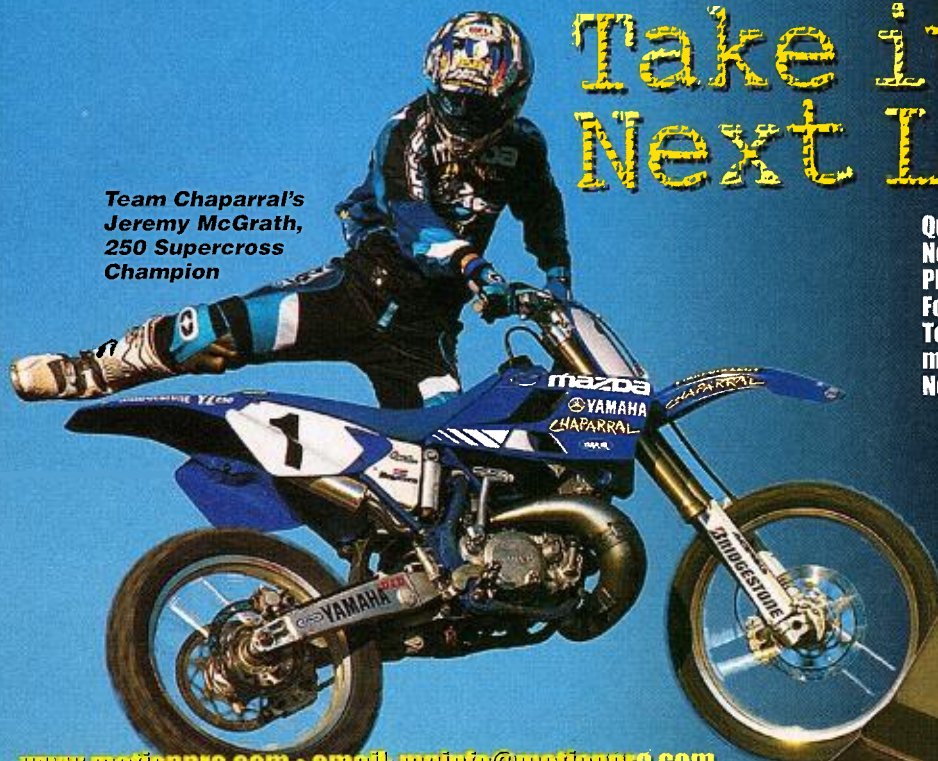
As expected, the extremely popular Jimmy Button has received a huge response from his fans and the racing world in general, and on Tuesday, February 3, Chaparral Motorsports held both a live and on-line auction for the rehabilitating star. Roughly 300 items were auctioned, and nearly 300 people showed up at the shop. With more than \$62,000 raised, the response was quite powerful. According to a report in *Cycle News On-Line*, Chaparral's Dorina Groves was almost overwhelmed with the number of responses and items sold, and it took her weeks to return all of the phone calls and e-mails. The hottest item was Jeremy McGrath's Anaheim Two helmet, which went for an almost unbelievable sum of \$9750 to the Primm Motorcycle Museum.



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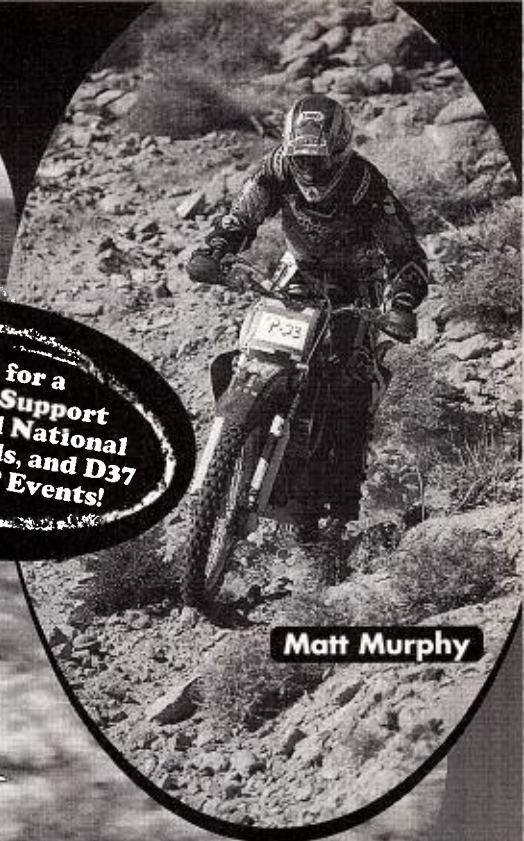
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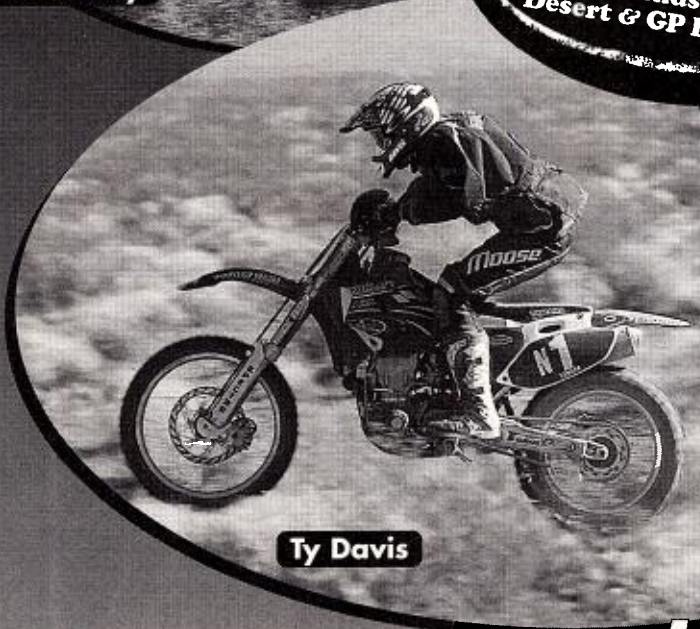


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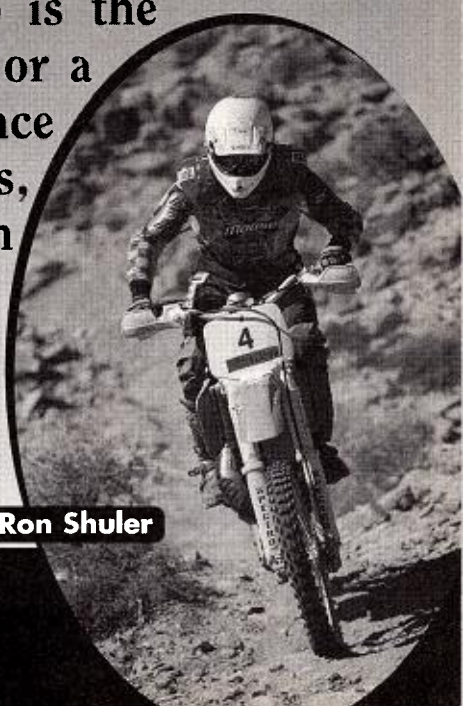


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BENCHED: Jeff Emig's team has been sidelined with injuries for most of the season. Phil Lawrence hasn't raced since injuring his shoulder at the beginning of the season.

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EIGHT LAPS TO GO: Tim Ferry led Phoenix until the 12th lap when teammate Jeremy McGrath upset his supercross dream. Ferry was one of the many riders who benefited from the easy track in Phoenix that coincidentally came one week after Jimmy Button's potentially career-ending crash in San Diego.

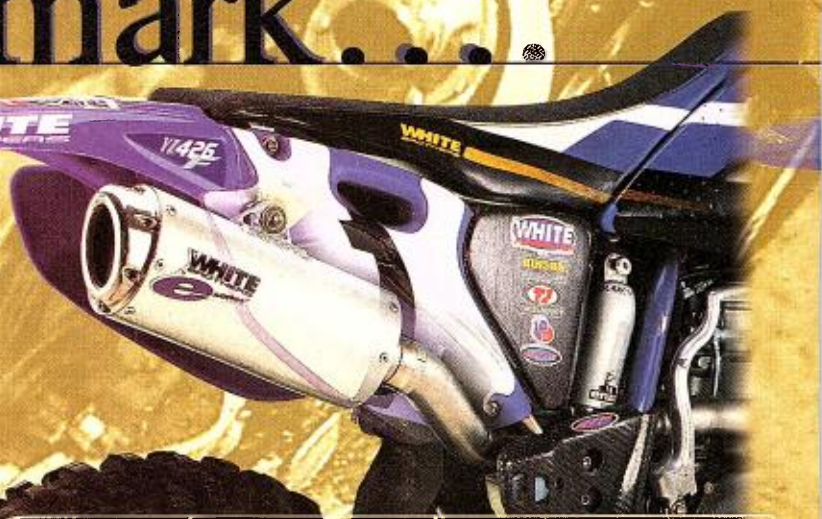
THE CHALLENGER? Kevin Windham is getting a lot of pressure from Honda to perform in light of Ezra Lusk's absence. The pressure might be too much for him to handle at this point in his career.

PHOTOS: KEN FAUGHT

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Works style turn-down end cap. Optional end cap is available for all disc style E-Series. Polished to a brilliant finish, this end cap features stainless steel construction with internal bead rolled full radius lip for a super clean look. Merges perfectly with silencer core if you choose to not install disc pack.



COMING AROUND: John Dowd finally appears to be regaining the speed he lost last year due to injury. Hopefully, he'll be back in form when the outdoor series begins. If so, it will be an awesome season.

COME BACK JEREMY: Greg Albertyn says he misses being teammates with Jeremy McGrath because McGrath has a way of elevating the riding ability of everyone around him. Albee's out of championship contention at this point, but he's starting to work on his consistency and strategy that could make him a title contender in 2001.

...The Only Option

R-Series



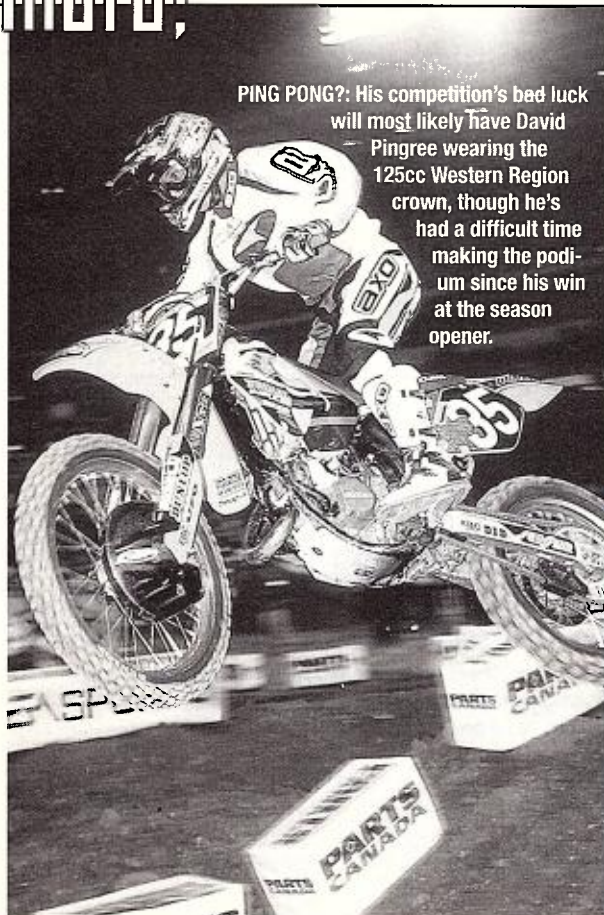
Introducing "R-Series" from White Brothers - A breakthrough in round silencer performance and construction. The new "R-Series" features lightweight aluminum billet technology, CNC'd to perfection. Looks as good as it performs! 304 series stainless steel S-Bend and/or Megaphone features "jewel-like" tig welding and exits into a 6063 aluminum silencer shell that is "sisal buffed" to a brilliant finish. Capped off with 6061 billet CNC'd inlet cap, outlet cap, and silencer mount. The exit snout features a 2" diameter smooth rolled tip for unobstructed flow. "R-Series" - It's your only option.

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PING PONG?: His competition's bad luck will most likely have David Pingree wearing the 125cc Western Region crown, though he's had a difficult time making the podium since his win at the season opener.



MITCH FRIEDMAN

THAT'S RIDICULOUS: Teammates are supposed to be close, but this sight probably isn't what team manager Erik Kehoe wanted. Take a close look—that's Ernesto Fonseca's legs tangled in Stéphane Roncanda's rear wheel. The incident happened while they were battling for second and held them up for 20 seconds. It also kept both of them off the podium.

WHY THE 125cc CLASS IS SO GOOD

Normally, injuries have a way of reducing the level of competition, but not this year. Instead, it's been the primary reason that this year's 125cc Eastern Region is going to be so blazingly hot.

Last year we got to see the two regional champs face off only once—at the series finale in Las Vegas. For 2000, we get to see Ernesto Fonseca square off with Nathan Ramsey on a weekly basis. Add to that the excitement of Travis Pastana's entrance onto the mainstream pro scene, and the addition of other proven heroes like Michael Brandes, Nick Wey, Brock Sellards, Stéphane Roncanda, Tyler Evans and Brandon Jessemann and the class has the potential to produce some of the best race action of the season, both indoors and out.

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“One of the big issues for all of us is land use. But the issue of health care discrimination is really scary. The AMA needs more members and more money to publicize these issues.”

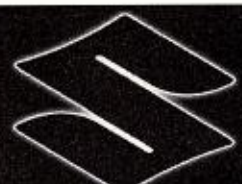


Malcolm Smith

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AMA

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| RM125 (1987-1988)..... | \$289.95 |
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| RM250 (1987)..... | \$289.50 |
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| RMX250 (1993-1998)..... | \$362.95 |

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| RM80 (1991-2000)..... | \$23.95 |
| RM125 (1983-1988)..... | \$34.95 |
| RM125 (1989-2000)..... | \$36.50 |
| RM250 (1982-2000)..... | \$41.95 |
| RMX250 (1990-1995)..... | \$48.50 |
| RMX250 (1996-1998)..... | \$45.95 |

RINGS

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| RM125 (1987-1991)..... | \$13.50 |
| RM125 (1992-2000)..... | \$12.50 |
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| RM250 (1986-2000)..... | \$13.95 ea. |
| RMX250 (1989-1998)..... | \$12.95 ea. |

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| RM125 (1987-2000)(*)..... | \$64.50 |
| RM250 (1977-1986)..... | \$72.50 |
| RM250 (1987-2000)(*)..... | \$77.95 |
| RMX250 (1989-1998)..... | \$75.50 |

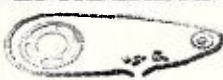
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Kit includes front steel and hardened alloy rear sprockets with an RK race chain.
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| RM250 (1984-1995)..... | \$70.95 |
| RM250 (1996-2000)..... | \$73.95 |
| RMX250 (1989-1998)..... | \$70.95 |

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LANDING ZONE: Brock Sellards finished second at the 125cc Eastern Region opener despite being landed on by Travis Pastrana. The ugly crash occurred during the opening laps when Sellards elected to double a triple jump. Sellards is one of 10 riders who has a serious shot at this title.

SERIES POINT STANDINGS

125cc WESTERN REGION

1. David Pingree (92)
 2. Shae Bentley (83)
 3. Greg Schnell (69)
 4. Rodrig Thain (66)
 5. Casey Lytle (64)
 6. Jiri Dostal (62)
 7. Tallon Vohland (61)
 8. Billy Payne (57)
 9. Travis Preston (55)
 10. Robbie Horton (44)
 - Justin Buckelew (44)
 12. Danny Smith (40)
 13. Travis Elliott (36)
 14. Chris Gosselaar (33)
 15. Ryan Terlecki (32)
 16. Jason McCormick (31)
 17. Erick Vallejo (30)
 18. Isaiah Johnson (24)
 19. Casey Johnson (22)
 20. Mark Burkhart (19)
- (After five of nine rounds)

125cc EASTERN REGION

1. Michael Brandes (25)
 2. Brock Sellards (22)
 3. Tyler Evans (20)
 4. Travis Pastrana (18)
 5. Nick Wey (16)
 6. Nathan Ramsey (15)
 7. Stéphane Roncada (14)
 8. Ernesto Fonseca (13)
 9. Brandon Jesseman (12)
 10. Kelly Smith (11)
 11. Mark Burkhart (10)
 12. Matt Shue (9)
 13. Tony LoRusso (8)
 14. Barry Carsten (7)
 15. Paul Currie (6)
 16. Jeff Gibson (5)
 17. Joseph Oehlhof (4)
 18. Ryan Clark (3)
 19. Brian Mason (2)
 20. Matt Walker (1)
- (After one of seven rounds)

250cc

1. Jeremy McGrath (140)
 2. David Vuillemin (128)
 3. Mike LaRocco (120)
 4. Ricky Carmichael (102)
 5. Kevin Windham (94)
 6. Sébastien Tortelli (83)
 7. Greg Albertyn (74)
 8. Tim Ferry (72)
 - Damon Huffman (72)
 10. John Dowd (65)
 11. Larry Ward (57)
 12. Brock Sellards (44)
 13. Stéphane Roncada (34)
 14. Heath Voss (32)
 15. Kyle Lewis (29)
 - Jimmy Button (29)
 17. Tyler Evans (24)
 18. Jean-Sebastian Roy (21)
 19. Mike Craig (17)
 - Nicholas Wey (17)
- (After six of 16 rounds)



HARD CHARGER: Nathan Ramsey fell at the start of the race and came from 20th to finish sixth. Ramsey spent most of his time chasing teammate Nick Wey and appeared to be fast even though he rode with a castlike brace on his throttle hand.

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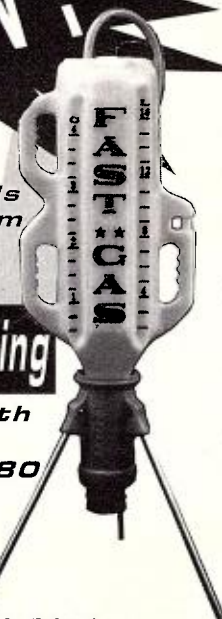
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Premix
1/2 liter



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Silverfire 2T
Premix
1/2 liter



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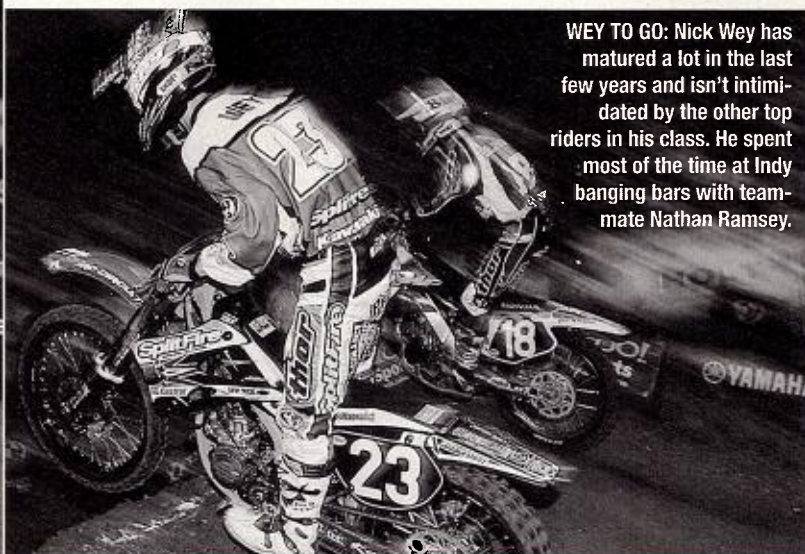
Run it™



IT'S ALREADY OVER: Tallon Vohland hasn't been able to complete a full supercross season with his health intact. He crashed in his qualifier at Houston and broke his shoulder, just a week after he fell twice in the main event in Phoenix. Fortunately, he'll be completely healed for the outdoors, where he stands a good chance of delivering Team SplitFire another championship.



KEN FAUGHT



KEN FAUGHT

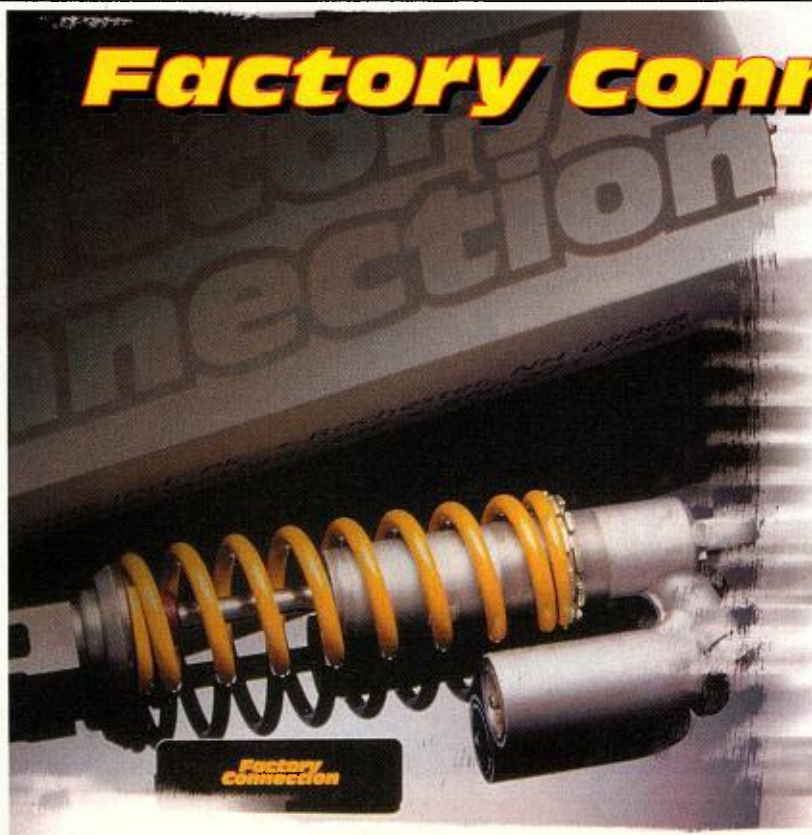
WEY TO GO: Nick Wey has matured a lot in the last few years and isn't intimidated by the other top riders in his class. He spent most of the time at Indy banging bars with teammate Nathan Ramsey.

NOTES

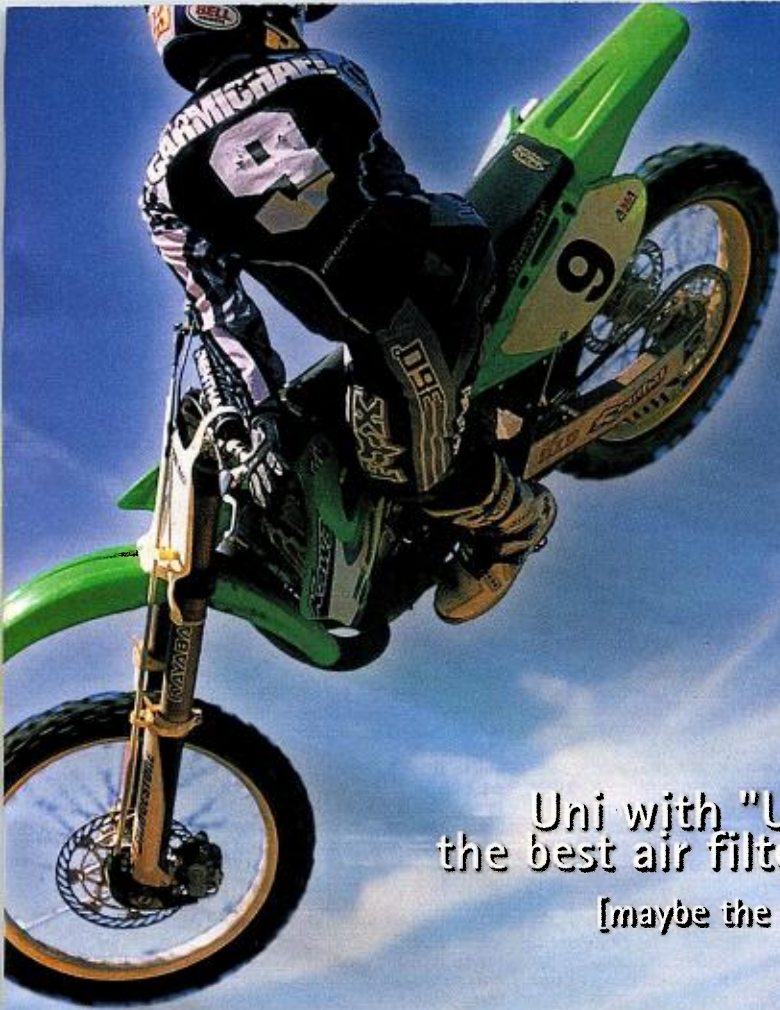
- Hot damn! There are reports that Damon Bradshaw may come out of retirement and ride the Glen Helen National for a bike test in *MXracer* magazine. If so, Bradshaw would ride the 125cc class on an FMF Honda. We have never been able to confirm whether Bradshaw and NASCAR'S Dale Earnhardt were separated at birth.
- Two-time 125cc World Champion Alessio Chiodi missed the Eastern Region series opener. Sources have indicated that his back is healed, but now an arm injury is the problem.
- Ricky Carmichael is exploring options of forming his own race team in the near future just like Mike LaRocco, Jeff Emig and Steve Lamson. This trend seems to be gaining more momentum as commercialization continues to bring big bucks into the sport.

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|-------------------------|----------|
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| CR125 2000 | \$34.50 |
| CR125 1996-99 | \$50.96 |
| CR250 2000 | \$68.95 |
| CR250 1996-99 | \$66.56 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$84.95 |
| OEM Rings | |
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$10.95 |
| CR125 1996-2000 | \$13.50 |
| CR250 1996-2000 | \$26.36 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$32.95 |
| OEM Cylinders | |
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$229.99 |
| CR125 1998-2000 | \$189.99 |
| CR125 1996-97 | \$245.99 |
| CR250 1997-2000 | \$222.99 |
| CR250 1996 | \$303.99 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$228.99 |
| OEM Fork Seals | |
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$15.99 |
| CR125 1996-2000 | \$12.89 |
| CR250 1996-2000 | \$18.08 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$13.24 |
| OEM Fiber Clutch Plates | |
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$5.54 |
| CR125 1996-2000 | \$6.25 |
| CR250 1996-2000 | \$7.99 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$7.99 |
| OEM Metal Clutch Plates | |
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$4.09 |
| CR125 1996-2000 | \$7.25 |
| CR250 1996-2000 | \$7.49 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$7.49 |
| OEM Clutch Levers | |
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$10.99 |
| CR125 1996-2000 | \$10.99 |
| CR250 1996-2000 | \$10.99 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$10.99 |

| OEM Front Brake Levers | |
|------------------------|---------|
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$11.92 |
| CR125 1996-2000 | \$11.92 |
| CR250 1996-2000 | \$11.92 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$11.92 |
| OEM Front Brakes | |
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$24.95 |
| CR125 1996-2000 | \$27.79 |
| CR250 1996-2000 | \$27.79 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$27.79 |
| OEM Rear Brakes | |
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$24.31 |
| CR125 2000 | \$28.50 |
| CR125 1998-99 | \$33.60 |
| CR125 1996-97 | \$24.31 |
| CR250 1996-2000 | \$24.31 |
| CR500 1996-2000 | \$24.31 |
| OEM Shift Levers | |
| CR80 1996-2000 | \$29.98 |
| CR125 1999-2000 | \$24.45 |
| CR125 1996-98 | \$31.45 |
| CR250 1997-2000 | \$31.50 |
| CR250 1996 | \$46.99 |
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| OEM Pistons | |
|------------------------|----------|
| KX80 1998-2000 | \$23.50 |
| KX80 1996-97 | \$42.75 |
| KX125 1998-2000 | \$38.75 |
| KX125 1996-97 | \$63.95 |
| KX250 1996-2000 | \$65.50 |
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| OEM Rings | |
| KX80 1996-2000 | \$21.50 |
| KX125 1996-2000 | \$9.95 |
| KX250 1996-2000 | \$27.50 |
| KX500 1997-2000 | \$29.95 |
| KX500 1996 | \$9.95 |
| OEM Cylinders | |
| KX80 1996-2000 | \$193.50 |
| KX125 1998-2000 | \$227.95 |
| KX125 1996-97 | \$258.50 |
| KX250 1998-2000 | \$247.95 |
| KX250 1996-97 | \$357.95 |
| KX500 1996-2000 | \$381.50 |
| OEM Fork Seals | |
| KX80 1996-2000 | \$6.76 |
| KX125 1999-2000 | \$6.76 |
| KX125 1996-98 | \$9.83 |
| KX250 1999-2000 | \$6.76 |
| KX250 1996-98 | \$9.83 |
| KX500 1996-2000 | \$9.83 |
| OEM Clutch Levers | |
| KX80 1998-2000 | \$9.50 |
| KX80 1996-97 | \$10.10 |
| KX125/250/500 | \$9.50 |
| OEM Front Brake Levers | |
| KX80 1996-2000 | \$12.24 |
| KX125/250 2000 | \$15.85 |
| KX125 1997-99 | \$12.24 |
| KX125 1996 | \$12.97 |
| KX250 1996-99 | \$12.24 |
| KX500 1997-2000 | \$12.24 |
| KX500 1996 | \$11.96 |

| OEM Fiber Clutch Plates | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| KX80 1998-2000 | \$10.70 |
| KX80 1996-97 | \$8.33 |
| KX125 1997-2000 | \$11.16 |
| KX125 1996 | \$10.81 |
| KX250 1996-2000 | \$8.50 |
| KX500 1996-2000 | \$10.60 |
| OEM Metal Clutch Plates | |
| KX80 2000 | \$10.70 |
| KX80 1998-99 | \$4.31 |
| KX80 1996-97 | \$13.52 |
| KX125 2000 | \$11.16 |
| KX125 1996-99 | \$13.52 |
| KX250 2000 | \$8.50 |
| KX250 1996-99 | \$13.52 |
| KX500 1996-2000 | \$13.52 |
| \$13.52 OEM Brake Pedal | |
| KX80 1996-2000 | \$26.35 |
| KX125 2000 | \$64.56 |
| KX125 1999 | \$60.40 |
| KX125 1996-98 | \$62.50 |
| KX250 2000 | \$62.50 |
| KX250 1999 | \$60.40 |
| KX250 1996-98 | \$62.50 |
| KX500 1996-2000 | \$59.45 |
| OEM Rear Brakes | |
| KX80 1998-2000 | \$30.58 |
| KX80 1996-97 | \$24.21 |
| KX125/250/500 | \$23.75 |
| OEM Front Brakes | |
| KX80 1997-2000 | \$24.21 |
| KX80 1996 | \$28.46 |
| KX125 2000 | \$28.46 |
| KX125 1996-99 | \$23.75 |
| KX250/500 | \$23.75 |
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| KX80 1996-2000 | \$23.69 |
| KX125/250/500 | \$44.89 |
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| RM250 2000 | \$39.99 |
| RM250 1996-99 | \$39.50 |
| OEM Rings | |
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$12.50 |
| RM125 1996-2000 | \$12.50 |
| RM250 1996-2000 | \$12.95 |
| OEM Cylinders | |
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$217.50 |
| RM125 2000 | \$305.50 |
| RM125 1996-99 | \$326.50 |
| RM250 2000 | \$331.75 |
| RM250 1996-99 | \$349.95 |
| OEM Fork Seals | |
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$8.95 |
| RM125 1996-2000 | \$10.95 |
| RM250 1996-2000 | \$10.95 |
| OEM Fiber Clutch Plates | |
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$7.99 |
| RM125 1999-2000 | \$6.50 |
| RM125 1996-1998 | \$8.50 |
| RM250 1998-2000 | \$6.50 |
| RM250 1997 | \$10.50 |
| RM250 1996 | \$8.50 |
| OEM Metal Clutch Plates | |
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$3.39 |
| RM125 1998-2000 | \$3.39 |
| RM125 1996-1997 | \$3.99 |
| RM250 1997-2000 | \$3.80 |
| RM250 1996 | \$5.95 |
| OEM Clutch Levers | |
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$9.50 |
| RM125 1997-2000 | \$10.95 |
| RM125 1996 | \$15.95 |
| RM250 1997-2000 | \$10.95 |
| RM250 1996 | \$15.95 |

| OEM Front Brake Levers | |
|------------------------|---------|
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$9.50 |
| RM125 1996-2000 | \$14.50 |
| RM250 1997-2000 | \$14.50 |
| RM250 1996 | \$14.50 |
| OEM Front Brakes | |
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$31.99 |
| RM125 1996-2000 | \$42.99 |
| RM250 1996-2000 | \$42.99 |
| OEM Rear Brakes | |
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$36.99 |
| RM125 1997-2000 | \$55.99 |
| RM125 1996 | \$59.99 |
| RM250 1997-2000 | \$55.99 |
| RM250 1996 | \$59.99 |
| OEM Shift Levers | |
| RM80 1996-2000 | \$33.95 |
| RM125 2000 | \$31.95 |
| RM125 1996-99 | \$38.95 |
| RM250 2000 | \$39.95 |
| RM250 1996-99 | \$30.95 |
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| RM80 1996-2000 | \$25.99 |
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| YZ250 1997-98 | \$297.00 |
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| | |
|------------------|--------|
| YZ80/125/250/400 | \$7.90 |
|------------------|--------|

OEM Fiber Clutch Plates

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| YZ80 1996-2000 | \$7.25 |
| YZ125 1996-2000 | \$6.75 |
| YZ250 1996-2000 | \$11.25 |
| YZ426 2000 | \$9.99 |
| YZ400 1998-99 | \$10.50 |

OEM Metal Clutch Plates

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
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| YZ125 1996-2000 | \$6.99 |
| YZ250 1996-2000 | \$9.65 |
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|------------------|---------|
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|------------------|---------|

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| YZ80 1996 | \$13.77 |
| YZ125 1996-2000 | \$17.95 |
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OEM Front Brake Pads

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|-----------------|---------|
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| YZ400 1998-99 | \$27.65 |

OEM Rear Brakes

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| YZ80 1996-2000 | \$27.65 |
| YZ125 1999-2000 | \$27.65 |
| YZ125 1996-1998 | \$37.75 |
| YZ250 2000 | \$27.65 |
| YZ250 1996-99 | \$37.75 |
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OEM Shift Levers

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| YZ125 1996-2000 | \$53.95 |
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| YZ250 1996-99 | \$53.95 |
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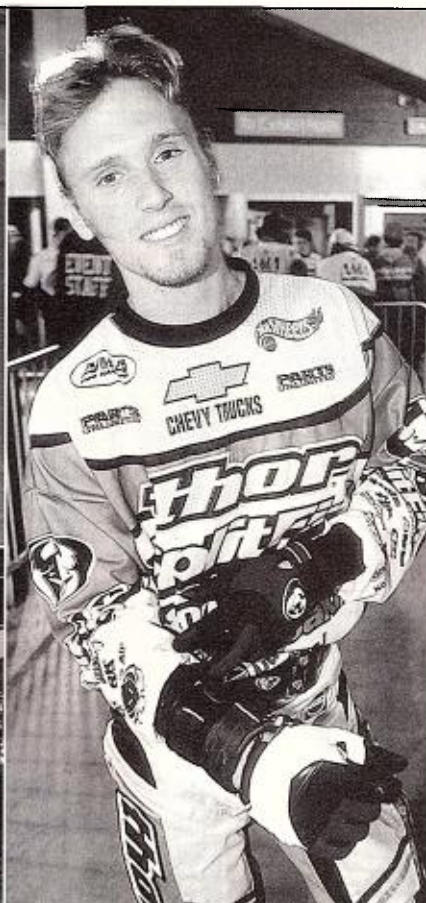
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KEN FAUGHT

NO MORE DOCTORS: Suzuki is hoping that Brandon Jesseman can complete a full season without getting hurt. He's very fast, but still unproven.

DEBUT: Team Husqvarna showed off its new semi in Indy along with factory riders Robbie Skaggs and Paul Carpenter.

MITCH FRIEDMAN



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Steve Lamson has finally sorted things out after months of exploring options. There were opportunities to ride GPs in Europe, Nationals in Japan and four-strokes in the States (a shot at taking Jimmy Button's spot on Team Yamaha), but Lamson has decided to turn down big money for the chance at a third AMA 125cc National Championship. Lamson has formed his team and will get factory parts from Honda in a deal much like Mike LaRocco's. With the new AMA numbering system, he'll sport the big, bold number six and will no doubt make things interesting.

THAT DOESN'T LOOK FUN: Nathan Ramsey rode with this custom-made brace to support his broken wrist.

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FIRST TEST: BRIDGESTONE 20-INCH FRONT TIRES

IS SMALLER REALLY BETTER?

By Scott Hoffman

We spotted new 20-inch front tires on some full-factory works bikes late last season, and Mike LaRocco is running one on his supercross bike this year—but do they have a future, or are they just one more gimmick? Remember the 23-inch front tires that emerged in the late '70s? They came stock on '79 Honda CR125s and were available as an aftermarket wheel assembly for a few other bikes. The 23-inch front tire was short-lived and it would be almost impossible to find a replacement today. We wanted the real story on the 20-inch front tire so we contacted Bridgestone guru, Doug Schopinsky, and offered our first-born male child for a test on the meats. Minus the child, we were on.

The 20-inch tire didn't evolve from the rim, but from tire technology. Honda approached both Bridgestone and Dunlop to develop a front tire that offered a plusher ride with less feedback to the rider through the handlebar. In order to achieve these goals, Honda asked for a tire that was slightly wider and had a taller sidewall. But to get the desired result and leave chassis geometry unaffected, tire manufacturers had to go with a smaller rim to reach the same outer diameter as a traditional 21-inch front tire. The end result was a tire that did indeed offer the slightly plusher ride Honda wanted, but had huge side benefits as well. The biggest gains were in braking and cornering performance.

We were privy to two 20-inch Bridgestone front tires that could basically be considered production

tires. That is if the technology is embraced and one or more manufacturers switch over to the new size as standard equipment. We ran some laps at Lake Elsinore's motocross racing facility on the standard 21-inch setup, then switched to the 20-inch tire with a soft terrain tread pattern. It took a couple of laps to get accustomed to the new meat, but as the laps wore on it was easy to understand what all of the talk was about. Front-braking power is unsurpassed. You feel the advantages of the new tire most while braking hard into corners with the bike leaning over. The front sticks like glue. The 20-incher allowed the rider to brake later and go into the corner faster. Instead of having to finesse the front wheel around flat corners and feel for the point where the front tire wanted to break loose, riders felt enough confidence in the 20-inch front to carry more speed through the corner. The front also allows a rider to carve tighter lines at higher cornering speeds. While accelerating out of corners, the front tire felt so well-planted that comparatively the rear wheel felt loose. As the track dried out, we switched to an intermediate-terrain tread pattern/compound and found equal results.

It's difficult to come to a conclusion after only one day of testing at one track, but we can say that it was an eye-opening

experience. We went back to the 21-inch front wheel at the end of the day, and after taking some laps we begged for the 20-incher back. For now, we can only dream about being able to buy and run the new rubber. There is still a lot of testing required before the OEMs would be willing to change over. And rumor has it that Honda may offer the 20-inch rim and tire as an accessory for the 2001 CR line—but don't hold your breath. After a day of testing, we know Bridgestone is on the right track, and we can imagine Dunlop has something in the works as well. There are also 20-inch rear rims with radial-style rear tires being secretly tested. The 19-inch rear tire took over in the early '90s, but the 20-inch front tire could be the standard of the 21st century.

You have to look fairly closely to notice a difference between the 21-inch (closest to the camera) and the 20-incher. The difference is easier to feel on the track. The ride is slightly plusher, and braking performance and steering accuracy are much improved.

SCOTT HOFFMAN



We felt the advantage of the 20-inch front tire most while braking with the bike leaned over. We found that we could brake later and harder, yet still carry more corner speed.



pro riding secrets

JUMP PASSING WITH JASON McCORMICK

If you race motocross and want to win, mastering all sorts of passes can elevate your results. Jump passes can be tricky; however, if performed correctly, they can be very effective. This is one situation the competition is least likely to anticipate. Traditional motocross schooling dictates you never follow too closely in case a rider makes a mistake or goes down. Jump passing holds the same principle—stay off your competitor's line and you might be able to beat them to the next turn. Plus, if they make a mistake or crash, you are in a position to avoid the rider. In the following photos, Jason McCormick pulls off a perfect jump pass.



In the first series of photos, McCormick eyeballs his competition to pinpoint their line over the small set of doubles. As soon as he has a bearing on his victim, he changes his line to jump to the inside. The tricky part is not misjudging the line of the rider you are trying to pass. Try to leave some room to avoid a midair collision.



The moment you know you have played the rider correctly, take the pass. As soon as you land, get on the gas to beat the rider to the next turn. This is the surprise—by the time the rider realizes you are side by side, there is no time to react and the pass is yours. As you can see, McCormick didn't take any chances. He motored by without having to perform an aggressive block pass. If you have the momentum, avoid a confrontational block pass; it is not worth the risk of going down. Practice the jump pass by changing lines over jumps where turns follow.

IFACTY Jeremy McGrath won the Tokyo Supercross in 1992.

PHOTOS: DONNIE BATES

DR Tested

MSR COLORADO SINGLE TRAK PAK

Are you sick of lugging around a heavy hip pack filled with tools while at the same time balancing a CamelBak full of water that is constantly bouncing up and down? If you answered yes, MSR has the solution to your problems with its new Colorado Single Trak Pak. The bag combines a functional backpack with an integrated water bladder packet to hold your CamelBak. The super-comfortable Single Trak is anatomically designed to fit the bending contour of your back while riding. It is secured to the rider with standard backpack shoulder straps and has a four-point chest harness for added stability.

On both sides of the Pak, you'll find external pouches which are great for storing water and oil bottles. There are four separate storage spots for stashing any other junk you might want to take on a ride, and a main compartment will hold the big stuff, like tools. The bag has an extraordinary amount of storage room for its size and features quality materials like YKK zippers and high-grade nylon cloth.

Another cool feature is the front pocket, complete with a zippered clear map compartment. There are also reflective accents and straps for night visibility, but we especially liked the external bungee webbing. By combining the bungee cord with the four cinch straps, you can secure your contents solidly in the backpack so they don't shift around while you're riding.

The Single Trak Pak stood up impressively against our abuse. We have already logged in a couple hundred off-road hours with the Pak, and it still looks like new. The zipper doesn't seem to be bothered by all of the dust and dirt that is inevitable with dirt biking, and the Pak has even survived a few good crashes. Everything stays well intact during a get-off, as we can definitely attest to. The MSR Colorado Single Trak Pak retails for \$79.95.

MSR: See your local Tucker Rocky dealer; www.msrracing.com

DR Rating: 9



PHOTOS: GARTH MILAN

TROY LEE DESIGNS TEAM EQUIPMENT BAG

It seems like every year a new gear bag comes out with some small gimmick to differentiate it from last year's model. This may be great news for all the stinky, sweaty, wretched gear you've been wearing while motoing all day long, but what about those nice khaki cargo pants and the trendy sweater that

your sweetheart bought you for Christmas? Those really don't belong in the same bag that holds your rotting knee pads. They deserve better.

The product engineers at Troy Lee Designs have just the thing for that clean yuppie outfit of yours. The Team Equipment Bag, which is basically a kid brother to the TLD Speed Equipment Bag, was designed more for casual clothes than dirty riding clothes. A smaller size is the biggest difference between the two, which makes the

Team Equipment Bag much better for hauling around on short trips where you just need to pack clothes for a few days. Although gear can be stuffed into the bag, it is designed to be more of an all-purpose bag.

There are four main compartments in the bag—two smaller ones on the side, a main middle one and a large separate area underneath the

bag. This makes packing easier; underwear, socks and T-shirts fit well on the sides, the middle area is good for folding nice shirts or sweaters and the bottom area is the perfect size for pants. There is also a small section for toothbrushes, razors and whatever other small items you might want to take.

This is not to say that the Team Equipment Bag can't be used for riding gear. We found the bag to be handy for taking to practice at local tracks. Although it is a tight fit, boots will go in; if you leave them out, you can stuff all other essentials like helmet, gloves, socks, jersey, kidney belt, et al, into the bag.

The Troy Lee Equipment Bag is beautifully constructed of heavy-duty twill nylon fabric for abrasion resistance and is very durable. The retail price is \$85.

Troy Lee Designs: 909/371-5219; www.troyleedesigns.com

DR Rating: 9

DR

1-POOR

5-GOOD

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pro riding secrets

AIRING OUT OFF-ROAD

Off-road races in the west have a variety of road, washout and ditch crossings that need to be negotiated safely. The safety requirements leave two basic choices: Scrub off lots of speed and lose time crossing slowly, or use the speed you have to fly across the hazard.

For some reason (probably to control flash-flood runoff), a channel had been cut across the desert near a Vegas-to-Reno road crossing. When a grader or bulldozer scrapes a road or a ditch in soft, sandy soil, it leaves a raised berm on both sides of the blade path. During the Best in the Desert Vegas-to-Reno course, riders had to negotiate this man-made ditch with a low, soft berm on both sides. The ditch was a short distance from a road crossing, but there was plenty of time to build speed on the approach. Watch as motocrosser-turned-off-road-racer Ty Davis launches over the dip with style.

1



As he leaves the road crossing, Davis is seated while on the smooth course and accelerating hard. In a race as long as V to R, a rider should sit and rest whenever the terrain allows. As he approaches the hump, Davis stands on the pegs for better control and extended vision. This is the time to decide whether to slow or go.

3



As the suspension starts to rebound from the impact with the face, Davis gets light on the pegs to help the bike get extra lift. Look closely and you can see that his right boot isn't even touching the footpeg. He can tell immediately that there is plenty of lift to clear the obstacle, so he gets back in the attack stance.

2



Davis judges the speed needed and decides to jump the entire obstacle rather than braking for it or pulling a wheelie across it. Once he makes the decision to jump the ditch, he switches from an upright off-road riding stance (that allows maximum vision into the distance and full leg travel for surprise bumps) to a more crouched motocross-style stance. He is balanced in the center of the machine. He uses his legs to load the YZ430 into the face of the berm to allow for more lift. At the speed Davis is traveling, he wants to make sure both wheels clear the far side of the dip.

4



As soon as the bike is back on the ground, Davis is hard on the gas and looking down the trail for the next potential hazard. Note that he hasn't even landed the bike yet, but he is already in a stance ready for the anticipated acceleration. He saved time and energy by choosing to sail across the ditch.

DR



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Mike Kiedrowski's Works Suzuki DR-Z400



Former motocross star Mike Kiedrowski and the new Suzuki DR-Z400 will both be raising dust in the GNCC series in 2000. Mechanic Shane Nalley and team manager Mike Webb have been getting Kiedrowski ready while Nalley and Yoshimura have been getting the DR-Z into race shape.



World's Trickiest Dirt Bike?

Team Suzuki Off-Road already had the most sophisticated rider/mechanic/machinery relationship of any of the off-road teams in 1999. For 2000, though, it upped the ante even more. The catalyst for the techno-infusion was the announcement of the new Suzuki DR-Z400 and 400E off-road machines. The DR-Z is an obvious choice for inclusion in the Team Suzuki Off-Road stable, but the Team's background is with two-strokes. Fortunately, U.S. Suzuki already has a relationship with one of the world's most successful four-stroke performance companies: Yoshimura R&D. Suzuki's DR-Z is a new model, but the engine is not that far removed from one cylinder of the company's TL1000R sport bike. The development of the TL1000R—and all of Suzuki's U.S.-based road race machinery—was handled by Yoshimura R&D.

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PHOTOS: KINNEY JONES



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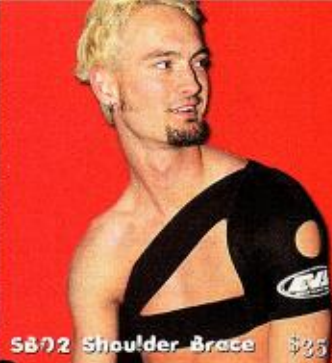
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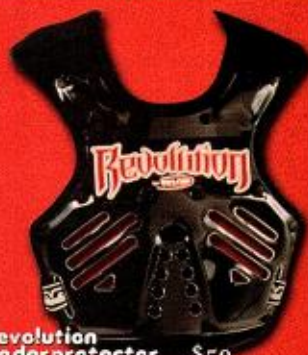
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M23 Front
M22 Rear
Hard Terrain

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 70/100x17 | 25.99 |
| 2.50x19 | 26.99 |
| 80/100x21 | 49.99 |
| Rear | |
| 90/100x14 | 29.99 |
| 3.00x16 | 30.99 |
| 5.10x17 | 52.99 |
| 100/100x18 | 50.99 |
| 110/100x18 | 50.99 |
| 100/90x19 | 54.99 |
| 110/90x19 | 57.99 |



M77 Front
M78 Rear
Intermediate/
Hard Terrain

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 70/100x17 | 25.99 |
| 80/100x21 | 48.99 |
| Rear | |
| 90/100x14 | 29.99 |
| 90/100x16 | 30.99 |
| 100/100x18 | 49.99 |
| 110/100x18 | 53.99 |
| 100/90x19 | 53.99 |
| 110/90x19 | 57.99 |



M59 Front
M70 Rear
Soft Terrain

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| 70/100x17 | 25.99 |
| 80/100x21 | 46.99 |
| Rear | |
| 90/100x14 | 26.99 |
| 90/100x16 | 29.99 |
| 100/90x19 | 55.99 |
| 110/90x19 | 62.99 |

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100/90x19 17.99
110/90x19 17.99
80/100x21 17.99

TIRES

BRIDGESTONE



M57 Front
M58 Rear
Intermediate Terrain

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 80/100x21 | 50.99 |
| Rear | |
| 100/100x18 | 51.99 |
| 110/100x18 | 54.99 |
| 100/90x19 | 57.99 |
| 110/90x19 | 61.99 |



M25 Front
M26 Rear
Mud & Sand

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| 80/100x21 | 47.99 |
| Rear | |
| 100/90x19 | 55.99 |
| 110/90x19 | 62.99 |



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| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| 80/100x21 ED11 | 46.99 |
| Rear | |
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| 110/100x17 ED12 | 58.99 |
| 110/100x18 ED12 | 61.99 |
| 120/90x18 ED12 | 59.99 |



C755
Hard Terrain

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| 3.00x21 | 23.99 |
| 3.25/3.50x21 | 27.99 |
| Rear | |
| 2.50x10 Front/Rear | 9.99 |
| 4.10x14 | 23.99 |
| 4.60x17 | 26.99 |
| 5.30x17 | 38.99 |
| 3.50x18 | 25.99 |
| 4.10x18 | 28.99 |
| 4.60x18 | 32.99 |
| 5.30x18 | 38.99 |

TIRES

HENG SHIN TIRE



C762 Front
C761 Rear
Hard Terrain

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| 80/80x17 | 15.99 |
| 100/80x21 | 24.99 |
| Rear | |
| 110/80x14 | 23.99 |
| 130/80x17 | 34.99 |
| 120/80x18 | 29.99 |
| 130/80x18 | 34.99 |
| 140/80x18 | 35.99 |



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Hard Terrain

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
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| 80/100x21 | 36.99 |
| Rear | |
| 110/100x18 | 42.99 |
| 100/90x19 | 43.99 |
| 110/90x19 | 45.99 |



C6001
Intermediate Terrain

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 80/100x21 | 32.99 |
| 3.25x21 | 32.99 |
| Rear | |
| 90/100x14 | 29.99 |
| 5.30x17 | 42.99 |
| 100/100x18 | 34.99 |
| 110/100x18 | 42.99 |
| 120/100x18 | 42.99 |
| 100/90x19 | 42.99 |
| 110/90x19 | 45.99 |
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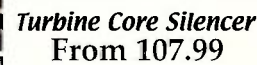
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Now Yoshimura has turned its attention to the DR-Z, and the result is a 35-pound diet, a dent in the world titanium supply, a gas tank full of \$300-a-gallon fuel and a big grin on (recently unretired) Mike Kiedrowski's face.

Yoshimura has been a major force in four-stroke racing since the late '70s, and it builds seriously trick stuff. (It used to sell a carbon-fiber fork for road racers.) Now it specializes in road race performance, since that is where technology (and to some extents, budgets) run wild and free. In 1999 alone, Yosh Suzukis won the AMA 750 Superbike title and the World Endurance Championship. But Yoshimura is a family business, and Fujio Yoshimura remembers when the company was a stronghold of performance parts for Honda dirt singles. For the most part, power is power.

There is more trickiness in the equation than the motorcycle. When Team Suzuki Off-Road went looking for a third team member, it didn't restrict its search to the off-road community. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and it appears that current GNCC

champ Rodney Smith has been so successful for the team, it is trying to recreate him—from retired motocrosser Mike Kiedrowski. Remember that Smith adapted successfully from a national and world-class motocrosser to off-road multitime national champ. Many European off-road champs make the same leap regularly. Like Smith, Kiedrowski was much more successful outdoors than at supercross. Also in his favor, the MX Kied has a well-known reputation as a training animal with an extreme regimen. Shane Nalley has been instrumental in Team Suzuki Off-Road's success as Steve Hatch's mechanic and as the team's four-stroke ace. Before Suzuki Off-Road, Nalley was an important part of Kiedrowski's success. With Nalley spinning wrenches and Kiedrowski spinning the throttle, the pair notched multiple national motocross championships.

Nalley gained his national reputation as a motocross mechanic fettling two-strokes, but his roots and heart are off-road on four-strokes. He's a national-level four-stroke competitor in the off-season. So when Suzuki announced



Team Suzuki Off-Road and Yoshimura have gone to extreme lengths to slice flab off of the DR-Z. Their efforts have netted over 35 pounds, but the cost per pound would probably make you pass out. The DSP carbon-fiber parts will be for sale to the public.

When Team Suzuki switched to inverted fork assemblies, this conventional works Showa fork from Jeremy McGrath's RM250 was left in the race shop and shaved eight pounds off Kiedrowski's bike while also offering incredible plushness. The action is pure off-road now.



In addition to doing very nice things for the DR-Z's power output, the Yoshimura titanium exhaust hacks 10 pounds off the all-up weight. If you pick up this pipe, make sure your face isn't over it because you will certainly put too much muscle into it. The thing feels like a foam display model.



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| 18" or 21" | 7.95 |
| Heavy Duty | 10.45 |

Dunlop

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| 3.25-4.10X18 | 5.00 |
| 100/90X19 | 13.46 |
| 110/90X19 | 13.46 |
| Heavy Duty 18" | 21.00 |
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| 18" or 19" | 8.21 |
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| 120/90X19 | 61.95 |
| 80/100X21 | 49.95 |

D739

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 100/100X18 | 56.95 |
| 110/100X18 | 57.95 |
| 100/90X19 | 57.95 |
| 110/90X19 | 61.95 |
| 80/100X21 | 52.95 |

D752 S/T

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| 2.50X10 | 20.05 |
| 90/100X14 | 28.95 |
| 90/100X16 | 29.95 |
| 70/100X17 Front | 25.53 |
| 100/100X18 | 50.95 |
| 110/100X18 | 50.95 |
| 120/100X19 | 55.95 |
| 70/100X19 Front | 26.95 |
| 100/90X19 | 53.95 |
| 110/90X19 | 57.95 |
| 120/90X19 | 62.95 |
| 80/100X21 Front | 49.95 |



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| 100/90X19 | 72.95 |
| 110/90X19 | 74.95 |



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| | |
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| 120/80-19 | 65.95 |
| 130/70-19 | 65.95 |

H12

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| 90/90-21 | 56.95 |
| 120/90-18 | 64.95 |
| 130/80-18 | 69.95 |
| 120/80-19 | 66.95 |
| 130/70-19 | 69.95 |



D755 S/T

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 100/100X18 | 49.95 |
| 110/100X18 | 53.95 |
| 100/90X19 | 57.95 |
| 110/90X19 | 63.95 |

D756 S/T

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 100/100X18 | 53.95 |
| 110/100X18 | 54.95 |
| 100/90X19 | 58.95 |
| 110/90X19 | 62.95 |
| 80/100X21 | 52.95 |

K490

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| 3.00X12 | 19.41 |
| 2.50X14 | 16.06 |
| 70/100X17 | 24.21 |
| 80/100X21 | 52.51 |

K139

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| '00 Edge Jersey | 29.95 | 26.95 |
| '00 Team 2 Jersey | 22.95 | 20.65 |
| '00 Bermbanger Jersey | 36.95 | 33.25 |
| '00 Bermbanger Pant | 89.95 | 80.95 |
| '00 Stylus Gloves | 36.95 | 33.25 |
| '00 Edge Gloves | 24.95 | 22.45 |
| '00 Team 2 Gloves | 19.95 | 17.95 |
| '00 ASX Gloves | 29.95 | 26.95 |

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| Millennium Pant Youth | 79.95 |
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| Millennium Jersey | 35.95 |
| Millennium Jersey Youth | 29.95 |
| 2000 Jersey | 27.95 |
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| Millennium Glove Yth. | 21.95 |
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| Millennium Goggle | 25.95 |
| Sport Goggle | 18.95 |

MSR

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| '00 Sys. 6 Vented Pant | 125.95 |
| '00 Rage Pant | 82.45 |
| '00 World Tour Pant | 67.45 |
| '00 System 6 Jersey | 43.15 |
| '00 Sys. 6 Vented Jersey | 43.15 |
| '00 Rage Jersey | 26.95 |
| '00 World Tour Jersey | 24.25 |
| '00 System 6 Gloves | 33.25 |
| '00 Rage Gloves | 22.45 |
| '00 World Tour Gloves | 17.95 |

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its new four-stroke DR-Z400 and 400E, Nalley was the obvious choice to turn the mass-produced trailbike/racer into a world-class weapon. Nalley had dragged his old motocross *compadre* Kiedrowski off-road before, and the motohead battled with then-GNCC champ Scott Plessinger in a muddy Indiana event. So negotiations were started, and Nalley was given the nod to develop the DR-Z and Kiedrowski for 2000.

Nalley and Kiedrowski will have

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|-----------|--|
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| Yes | Head work and blueprinting/\$TBA |
| No | Transmission work and blueprinting |
| No | Internal titanium fasteners and miscellaneous pieces (weight related, no performance gain) |
| Yes | Yoshimura Datalogger (bar-mounted data acquisition)/\$TBA |
| Yes | Yoshimura custom cam timing/\$TBA |
| Yes | Yoshimura programmable ignition/\$TBA |
| No | Yoshimura external engine parts and brackets (weight) |
| Yes | Yoshimura MJN carburetor kit/\$159.95 |
| Yes | Yoshimura bar-mounted hot-start button/\$129.95 |

FULL-RACE "MOTO" MOTOR

Uses the same parts as above plus those listed below.

| | |
|-------|--|
| Yes | Yoshimura titanium valve spring retainers/\$TBA |
| Yes | Yoshimura titanium valves/\$TBA |
| Yes | Yoshimura titanium valve springs/\$TBA |
| Yes | Yoshimura piston (same size different dome and other goodies)/\$158.95 |
| Maybe | Yoshimura flywheel—stock and two with incrementally higher weight percentages |
| No | Yoshimura titanium internal rotating mass and related items |
| Yes | Yoshimura Japan cams (mostly duration change, design by Fujio Yoshimura)/\$TBA |
| Maybe | Mikuni prototype carburetor |

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| Yes | DSP carbon-fiber frame guards/\$99.99 |
| Yes | DSP carbon-fiber skid plates/\$115.99 |
| Yes | DSP carbon-fiber right case guard/\$115.99 |
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| No | Works Showa shock absorber |
| No | Kit swingarm (race-specific) |
| No | Works Nissin brake components |
| Yes | 909 handlebar and controls, etc./\$89.95 |
| Maybe | Various configurations of triple clamps |
| Maybe | Various suspension linkage components |
| Yes | Team graphics and seat cover/\$179.95 |
| No | Works radiator shrouds |
| No | Kit hubs |
| Yes | Dunlop tires/\$59.88-\$63.88 |
| Yes | IMS fuel tank with dry-break/\$339.95 |
| Yes | Yoshimura titanium subframe (one pound lighter)/\$695.95 |

YOSHIMURA R&D: 909/628-4722

WEIGHT WATCHER

Stock bike weight (dry): Approx. 265 pounds
Race bike weight: Under 228 pounds
Stock exhaust weight: 13 pounds
Yoshimura exhaust system: 3.1 pounds



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three engines prepped by Yoshimura, and each week the used, one-race motor will go back to Yoshimura for a full rebuild. During that rebuild, the engine will be taken completely apart and *all* of its internal titanium nuts and bolts will hit the trash can. The engine will then be reassembled with all-new fasteners, a blueprinted transmission and a titanium valve train. Two of the engines will have basically stock internal specs with stock compression. These engines are for tight and slippery race conditions. For faster GNCC races (probably the Florida opener and Loretta Lynn's), a "moto" engine with more power will be used. Both engines run on race fuel that tallies at \$75 a liter. That's roughly \$300 a gallon! The GNCC rules do not restrict fuel makeup, so anything goes.

We just weighed the stock kickstart bike on a calibrated digital scale at 285 pounds full of gas and ready to ride. That means a stocker with an empty tank tips the scale to at least 265 pounds. After Nalley, Yoshimura and DSP finish throwing titanium, magnesium and carbon fiber into the 400cc thumper, Kiedrowski's bike weighs in *under* 228 pounds! Ten of those pounds are dieted away courtesy of the titani-

um exhaust system. Another eight were shaved when Nalley swapped for the works Showa conventional fork last seen on the front of Jeremy McGrath's works RM supercrosser.

Dirt Rider had the chance to try both of Kiedrowski's DR-Zs—his practice bike with a stock engine and the Yosh titanium exhaust, and his race bike with a version of the "moto" engine. Yoshimura has many hours of dyno and testing time, so it believes it has the best pipe available, but it notes that the DR-Z loves exhaust mods. Even just changing the muffler section makes a huge difference. We can vouch for that. The stocker with the complete Yoshimura exhaust system runs very hard. The engine still produces soft, linear bottom power that is perfect for technical off-road sections, but rages at higher rpm. The hit is never as violent as a Yamaha WR400F, but the power output is definitely in YZ/WR territory.

Then we headed out for a brief loop on the full-race machine. It features works hubs, works Showa suspension components and all the trick engine goodies. That bike handled unbelievably well. No doubt thanks in part to Nalley's input, Kiedrowski hasn't fallen

Even though much road race and motocross technology has gone into the Kiedrowski DR-Z, all the parts used in the final edition offer pure off-road performance advantages.



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clamp kit



Pro Taper bar



stabilizer



stabilizer brackets



Yoshimura offers this handlebar-mounted hot-start button (a lever actually found just under the decompression lever) for kickstart DR-Z models—very trick. It is one of the few Yosh parts that is heavier than stock, but it saves a tremendous amount of time.



Yoshimura's Data-logger keeps track of exhaust gas, oil and water temperature. It helps the crew judge the efficiency of engine combinations.



That number plate saves a lot of weight compared to the stock headlight and fork boots. The WER steering damper adds weight but more than repays the ounces in rider energy savings and confidence.

We have no doubt that the DR-Z could be raced at the highest levels of motocross competition with the full-mod engine, yet it remains pleasant and easy to ride off road—even in technical conditions with minimal traction.



back on motocross suspension settings. The fork and shock are both very plush and calibrated perfectly for off-road competition. The engine hits harder, earlier and stronger than the stock powerplant. Ridability is still a strong point, but the engine is definitely a monster when you twist the throttle hard.

Check out the parts lists to see the true extent of the exotica that Kiedrowski's bike contains. We also note whether each part will be available to the public. One thing we know for sure is that as a whole package, no bike in the GNCC will be trickier than this one, and we aren't sure that any works motocross bikes will surpass it either. **DR**



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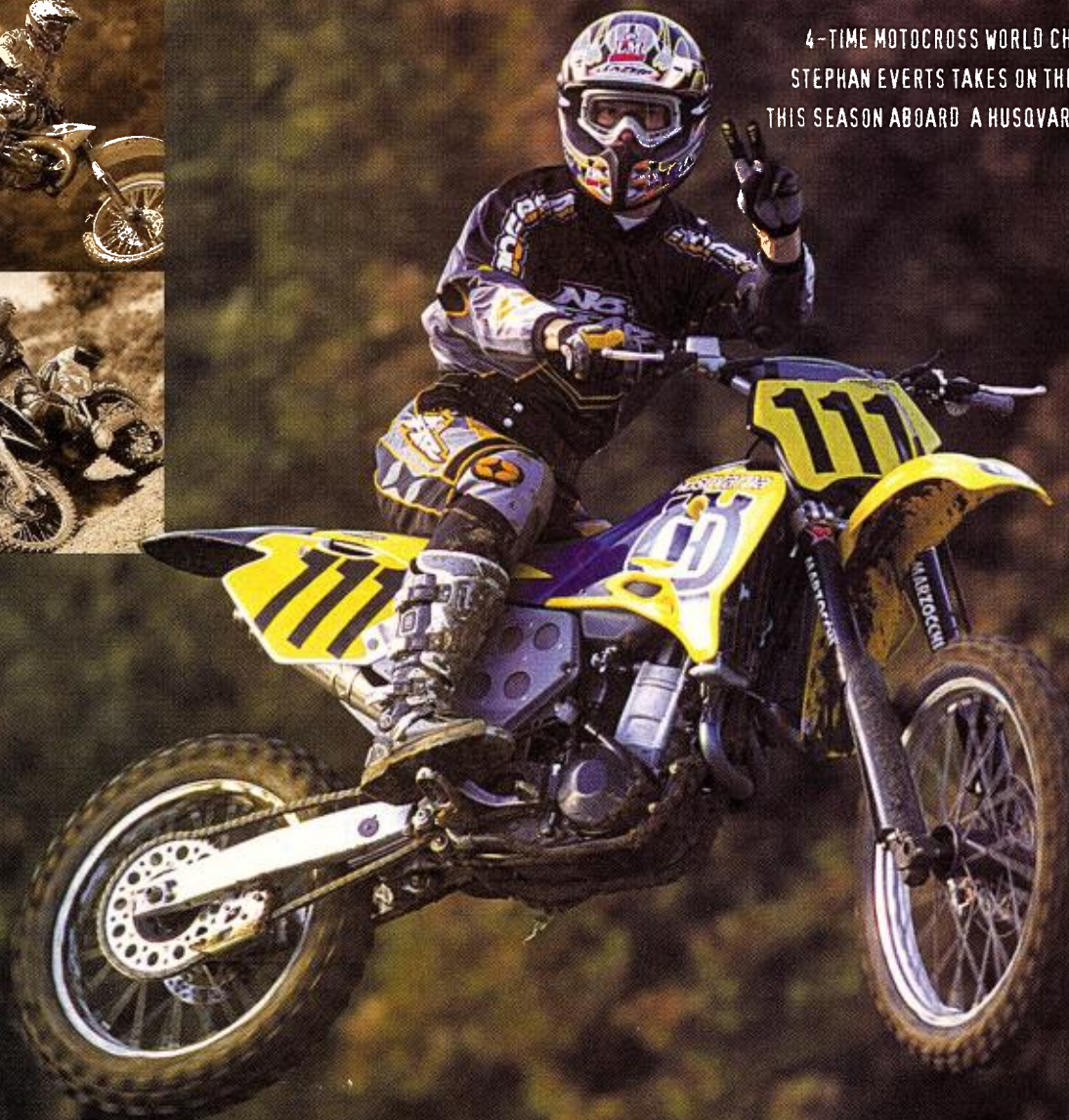
[FACT] The AMA rules state that MX tracks should be no narrower than 16 feet.

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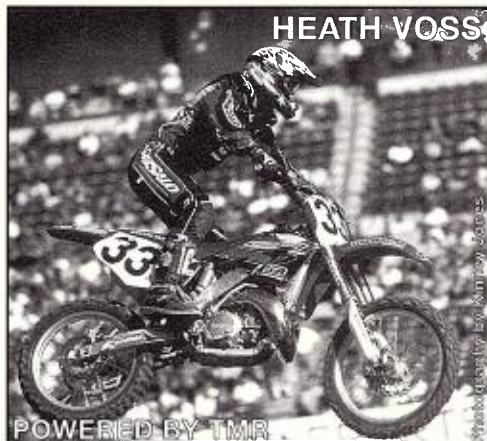
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tell others what they can and cannot wear. If anything, Fox Clothing is getting free publicity.

You could easily turn the tables on this argument. For instance, Yamaha's current ad campaign uses an Austin Powers theme to pitch its line of '00 YZs. I don't see anyone in Hollywood downing the world of motocross. Once again, free publicity. Hopefully, this intolerant reader does not get the current Fox Racing catalog. As I recall, the last few pages are women's clothing which have no relevance to motocross gear. Who knows, maybe if JT gear was as visible today as Fox, they still might be around.

Mr. Open-Minded
via the Internet

NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK

In your January 2000 issue you did a shootout of the new 250cc motocrossers.

In the Honda section your article said that a 294-715 needle was used in place of the 289-715 needle. I contacted two Honda dealers to get a 294-715 needle and both told me none existed. My manual lists two leaner needles, a A735/289R/A327/A487 and a A725/289R/A327/A487. What's the deal?

Bill Fleming
via the Internet

The 294-715 needle is an actual part, although it may not be available through Honda dealers yet. Eric Crippa from American Honda recommends starting with the stock needle in the stock clip position—182 main jet, 50 pilot—and turn the air screw 1.3 turns out.—Ed.

DANGER?

I am an avid supercross fan and I enjoy an exciting race like the next guy, but the one thing I can't stand is a rider getting hurt because the tracks are dangerous. I am expressing my grievances after watching the first three supercross races in Anaheim and San Diego. Each week the riders were dropping like flies. I understand supercross is all about jumps and technical tracks; however, I would rather see riders racing on the track than racing to the hospital. The whoops at the Anaheim and San Diego races were so intense that only a handful of the top riders in the world were able to skip across. Watching

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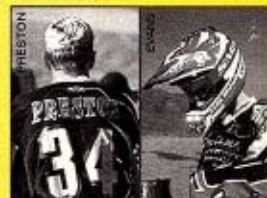
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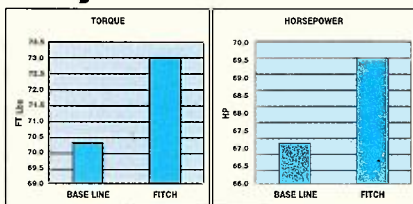


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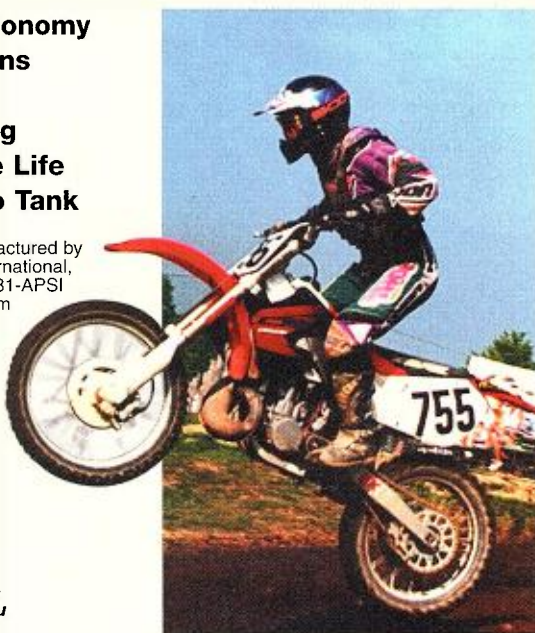


KURT McMILLEN DID, AND JUST LISTEN TO WHAT HE HAD TO SAY

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Kurt McMillen

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practice at San Diego, I witnessed Yamaha's Jimmy Button drop his front wheel in one of the huge whoops, instantly getting ejected from his bike. I heard later that he sustained what may be career-ending injuries. I am not an expert at track building, but my opinion and years of watching supercross tell me tracks can be made technically difficult but less dangerous. At the Anaheim Two race the quad jump was so huge a rider could have been killed if he had to bail off the bike in midair. Fortunately, both Greg Albertyn and Stéphane Roncada pulled off after they came up short. I personally like sections that require rhythm and timing. If a rider makes a mistake, his timing is thrown off but he's not thrown off the bike. Fans are looking for good racing with lots of passes and close action, not stretchers full of racers. I guess I am an old-school fan, but I can remember watching Bob Hannah race supercross back before big jumps and it was just as exciting. There has to be a happy medium.

Jeff Baker
 via the Internet

PACE VS. AMA SUCKS!

I am saddened by the decision of Pace Motor Sports to cut ties with the AMA as the sanctioning body of the Pace Arenacross Series. Our sport is finally emerging into the mainstream with supercross, motocross and now free-style competitions being aired on network television. And, to maintain this momentum, the promoters and the AMA must remain a team and work together to further promote our sport.

In addition, the AMA promotes and helps protect our freedoms as motorcycle enthusiasts. If you are reading this magazine, love off-highway vehicle recreation and are not a member of the AMA, you should call its toll-free number 800-AMA-JOIN now to join! Membership is only \$29 per year and there are many benefits of membership, including the AMA's efforts to protect your right to ride!

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Ask Dr. Dirt

DOUBLE, DOUBLE OIL AND TROUBLE

I live on a farm and I can get lots of 15W-40 motor oil. I run this in my '96 KLX250. My dealer said I should only use oil made for bikes. We run 15W-40 in our tractors and have no problem, so why can't I run it in my bike?

Farmer MacBeth on the Internet

Dear Mac,

Your dealer is right: You should only run oil that is made for bikes. I know that motorcycle oil is considerably more expensive than automotive oil, but there are good reasons why.

Motorcycle engine oil also lubricates the transmission and the clutch. In cars and tractors, the transmissions and clutches are lubricated by separate oil systems with dedicated filtration systems. Motorcycle oils are formulated with a much more complex and expensive additive package than car oils. This additive package consists of synthetic polymers, zinc/phosphorous and some esoteric detergents to keep the clutch ma-

terial in suspension. These additives aren't cheap to produce, and motorcycle oil has about three times the additives of a cheap car oil.

Another reason to stay away from car oils is to avoid the new-generation API-SH or "friction-modified" lubricants; these can lead to slipping clutches. Almost all bike manufacturers specifically warn against using these new oil formulations.

NOT SALISBURY STEAK

My friend heard about a Salisbury clutch. He was telling me about it and neither of us knew what it was, so I was hoping you could help us out.

Curious Jimmy on the Internet

Dear Curious,

A Salisbury clutch is a fascinating piece of engineering. Typically used in snowmobiles and the Honda Odyssey and Pilot off-road buggies, a Salisbury drive system consists of two sets of very

flat cones laid over on their sides, where the points of each set of cones are aligned on a shaft and pointed so they face each other forming a V. Now stretch a very wide belt around these sets of cones so that the belt lies in the valley formed by the conical faces. The front set is attached to the engine and drives the rear set via the tension of the belt. The rear set is attached to the axle or input shaft of the gear-reduction box on the vehicle, transferring power to the rear wheels.

A Salisbury drive is not only a clutch, but a continuously variable transmission as well. At idle and very low engine speeds, the front set of cones are spread so far apart from each other that there is no tension on the belt; thus, the engine is disengaged from the driven faces and rear wheels. As engine rpm rise, the front set of conical faces converge toward each other, eventually tensioning the belt and transferring power to the rear set of faces; this is the clutch func-

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tion of the Salisbury drive.

The rear set of faces are responsible for the "shift" action of the Salisbury drive. At low vehicle speeds, the rear faces are very close to each other so that the belt rides up in the very top of the valley formed by the conical faces. As input shaft speeds rise, these conical faces diverge so that the belt can ride lower in the valley. The rear set of conical faces are akin to the rear sprocket on your motorcycle. The rear faces start out with a big diameter to give maximum gear reduction for quick acceleration; as vehicle speed rises, the rear faces (sprocket) "shift" to a smaller diameter to provide taller gearing. This continuously variable gearing is ideal for keeping a peaky two-stroke engine on the pipe at all vehicle speeds.

SHADE-TREE YZ

I have a '98 YZ400F. The bike is stock except for a 10-ounce flywheel and is set up for woods riding. Until this past May, I had been replacing my plug every six months or so due to fouling. Occasionally, I would have problems getting it started when it was cold. I met a guy who has a '99 YZ400F who assured me he could make my bike run and start

better. So I let him try.

He went up one size on the pilot jet and changed the needle setting. I got the bike back, and for the first two rides, the bike was great. It started on the second kick when it was cold; it seemed as though I had a new engine with more power. Then I decided to go to the mountains to ride.

Since that ride, the bike hasn't been the same. I have to take extra plugs with me now. With a fresh plug, it will start almost the first time and run for that entire ride. If it doesn't start within the first 10 kicks, it's not going to start without a fresh plug. What can I do? I'm spending as much money on plugs as gas for the bike.

Fouled Out on the Internet

Dear Fouled Out,

Clearly, richening the carburetor settings was not a step in the right direction for your bike.

Adjust the float height according to the procedure outlined in the factory service manual. Your original plug-fouling problems may have been caused by a too-high fuel level (low float-height measurement). Next go back to all the stock carburetor settings except for the

fuel screw (pilot screw). Set the fuel screw at three turns out from seated. Start your bike and ride it for five minutes. Once the bike is up to operating temperature, set the idle speed just a little high; with the bike idling, turn the fuel screw in (leaning the idle mixture) until the engine protests. Then turn the screw back out from that point about a quarter turn. Turn the engine off, and restart the bike immediately.

If the air temperature is less than 80 degrees, the bike should start without having to use the hot-start button. If it needs the hot-start, lean out the fuel screw a little more. The Yamaha (Genesis) five-valve engines have a very narrow tolerance for incorrect mixture. You're going to have to make small changes to the carb settings, and test each change individually for positive effect before settling upon different carburetor settings from stock.

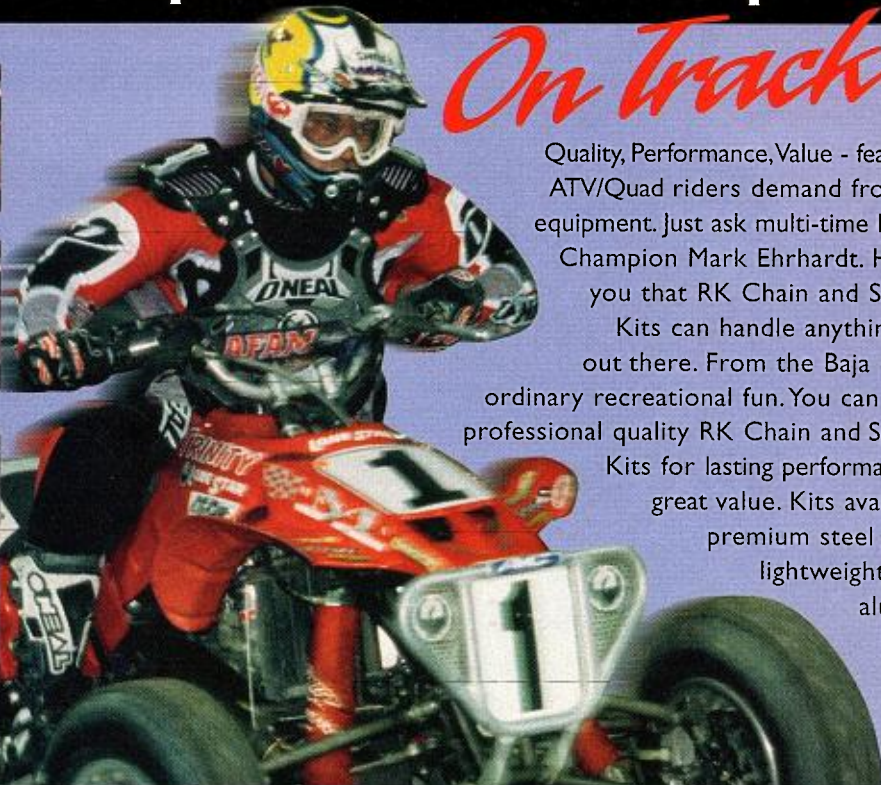
Questions for Dr. Dirt? Be sure to include all pertinent information, including the make and model of your bike, any modifications made and a clear description of the problem. Due to the volume of mail Dr. Dirt receives, we can't answer all queries, but we'll answer as many as possible in the magazine. Send your questions to *Dirt Rider*, Attn: "Dr. Dirt," 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515; drm1@emapUSA.com.

DR

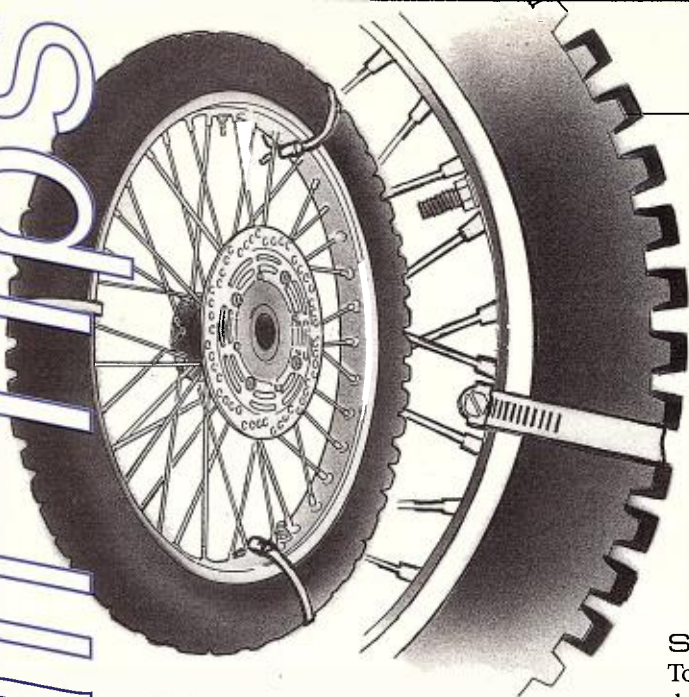
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STRAPPING

Use this old goggle strap trick to prevent your elbow guards from sliding off your arms: Turn the strap of your elbow guards inside out and place dabs of silicone sealant on the strap every half-inch. After the sealant dries, you have a high-friction elastic band that won't slide around on your jersey.

*Leo Schwab
Lake Orion, MI*

FLAT CLAMPS

Flats suck, and I have had my share of them. The woods where I ride have a good section of railroad track, and the sides of the track are great for getting up in the higher gears, but most of the scrap metal littering the area ends up in my tires. From the tracks back to camp is a good 20 miles, and I have to cross two streams and two mud holes. Between the water, mud and frequent bouts of zero air pressure, the rear tire will spin on the rim. When I get a flat on either wheel, I take three to five metal hose clamps (which I carry in my fanny pack for this purpose) and fasten them around the tire. I make sure the clamps are between a row of knobs, around the rim and between two spokes. I tighten the clamps to the point where the tire will not spin, but not to the point where they deform the tire or damage the rim. The clamps keep the tire from spinning and give it a more solid and stable feel, instead of the loose and wobbly sensation I get with an unclamped flat. This is an inexpensive trick that has worked over and over again. The clamps fit easily in a tool pouch.

*Adam Dhamer
Wheaton, IL*

SHIFTER FIX

To remove a bent shifter shaft, I have found it easier to drill out the shaft from the plate on the other end of the shaft inside the clutch area, and then just pull out the shaft from the shift-lever side. The shaft is soft steel so it can be drilled into easily, but you might have to use a grinder to finish the job since the plate is hard. I pack rags in the clutch area and then rinse with solvent when done to prevent any damage from the metal chips. I also change the transmission oil shortly afterward just to be sure.

*Tim Loomis
Carver, MN*

ROBERT ENRIQUEZ



*Team IMS Pro-Series
- Don Upton-*

SAFETY GOOP?

If the protective inner foam pads are falling off your chest protector, you can permanently reattach them with a product called Automotive Goop. Just rough up the plastic a little, clean and apply a thin layer of Goop to the plastic and the pads. Let the Goop tack up, then press together and let cure. You will have a bond that is stronger than the original hot-melt production glue.

*Leo Schwab
Lake Orion, MI*

EASY SCREW

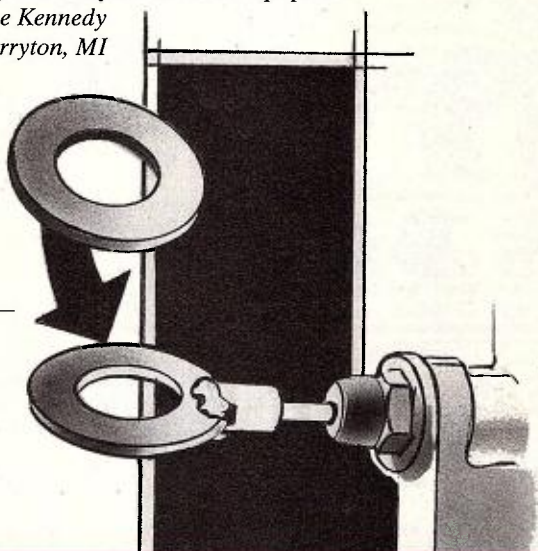
Carburetor-idle adjustments are a snap if you use JB Weld to attach a washer to the head of the idle screw. I use a washer roughly the size of the end of a AAA battery. Just take a small piece of tape to hold it in place until the JB Weld dries and you're done. Now you can quickly adjust the idle with gloves on or with cold hands.

*John W. Griffin
Minden, LA*

BUTTON UP

I just purchased a 2000 KTM 300 E/XC and found one thing rather odd. Down at the water pump, there is an opening that is threaded and tends to pack up with mud. I went to the local hardware store and bought $\frac{1}{8}$ O.D. plastic plugs that have a smooth, round button head. I trimmed the length down some, applied a dab of silicone on the backside of the head and now the opening is protected. At 26 cents each, I keep many in my toolbox just in case one pops out.

*Bruce Kennedy
Barryton, MI*



"Trail Tips" is a forum for riders to share helpful hints they've devised. We pay \$25 for each Trail Tip we print (or, if you wish, we will donate your payment to the AMA Legislative Support Fund). Illustrated tips are preferred, so please include a sketch or photo if appropriate (sorry, we cannot return any materials you send). Mail your tip to *Dirt Rider*, Attention: "Trail Tips," 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515, or via e-mail at dmail@emapUSA.com.

You must also include your name, address and social security number. We can't pay you if we don't have your social security number. As we print many tips about many subjects, we cannot vouch for the accuracy or safety of every tip we print. We urge you to take commonsense precautions before attempting any of these tips. **DR**

ROBERT ENRIQUEZ

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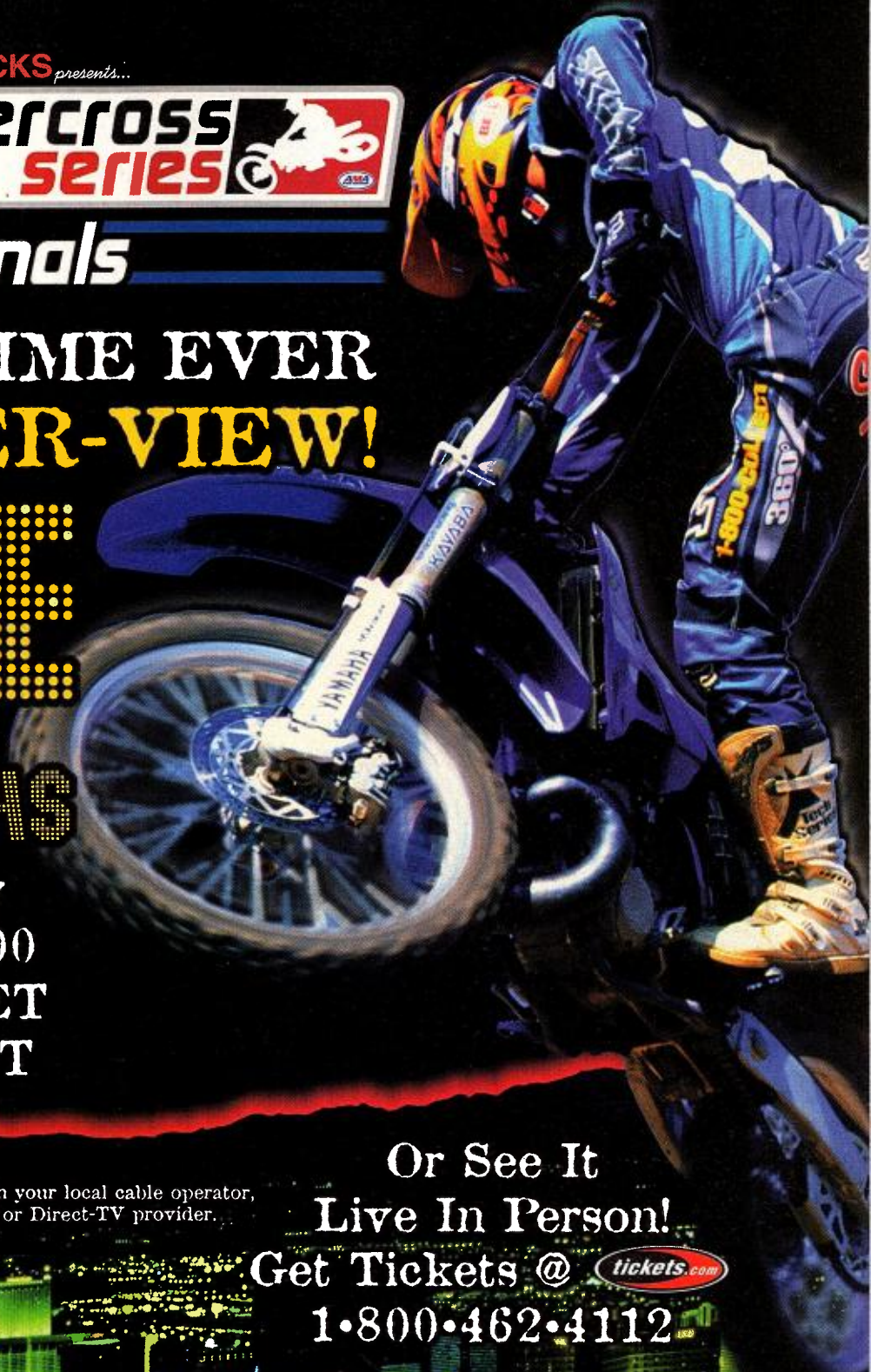
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Continued from page 84

Conga Line Comments

Seven of 12 chose this bike number one.

Mark Getzfrid: Fast! Easy to ride, with good ergos. This baby can conga. Shifting under power was excellent. The KTM handled, braked and accelerated excellent. Scary-fast six-speed.

Tim Johnson/6'6"/195 lb/Expert/owns a KTM 360 M/XC: Quiet but still revs. The clutch has no fade and is not grabby. Ergos better for tall people. Awesome.

John Bumgarner: Great motor. Not as much grunt as the XR, but big power on top. Love that start button. I think the AMA should ban them 'cause I don't have one. The clutch worked flawlessly. The rear brake was a little grabby. The chassis fit my frame better than the other bikes. It flicks like a 250. Excellent suspension, best of the group. Very good off-road and still good in the moto section. I could race this bike at any event right out of the crate, plus I could use it when I'm out with the kids.

Ray Gibbs: This stroker is fast! Nothing needs improvement, well, maybe better lights but that really isn't a factor. Just push a button and fly!

SUMMARY

Of the daytime testers, the KTM was pretty much the rave. It's light, has the button and makes unreal power. While our nighttime denizens also preferred the 520, they liked the XR because of its big power, solid and stable chassis, well-planted front end and high-speed stability. But all felt it was too heavy, especially considering that the others had electric start. While considerably improved, the 600 'Berg still follows its own course in styling and ergonomics, but a strong motor and solid chassis are its appeal. Choose your arena, and choose your weapon. The bottom line, though, is the KTM 520 E/XC raises the bar up, way up. Who can answer this call? **DR**



GARTH MILAN

The Honda XR650R broke a clutch plate during the test, but the flaw was discovered after a rider returned saying he was stuck on a hill for a while. The XR also started the test with more hard miles than any of the other bikes had. We credit customer abuse, though stock gearing that we rated four teeth too tall for our conditions was unquestionably a factor.

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AXO Misc

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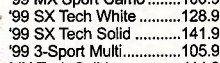
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Moose M12000

'00 M1 Pants...CALL
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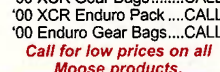
Moose Monarch Pass 2000

'00 Monarch Pass Jkt...CALL
'00 Monarch Pass Pant...CALL

Moose Misc 2000

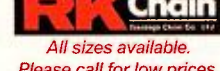
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'00 M1 Vest...CALL
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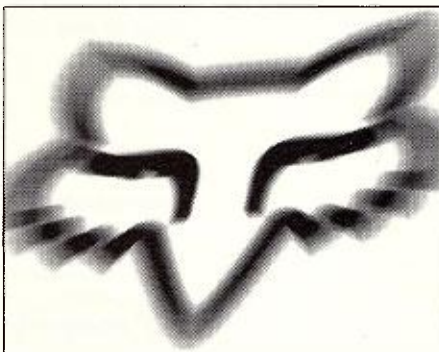
D&D Design, Inc.
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In the June issue of **DIRT RIDER**

- ✖ The GNCC kicks off. Complete coverage and photos.
- ✖ Helmets, helmets, helmets. Look good and protect your noggin.
- ✖ Gary Semics reveals Jeremy's training regimen.

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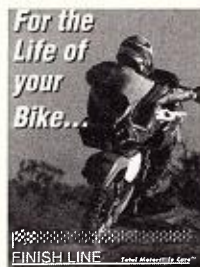
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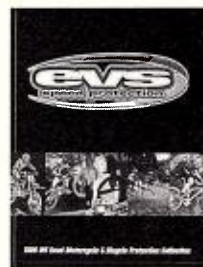
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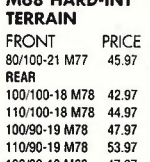
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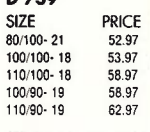
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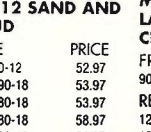
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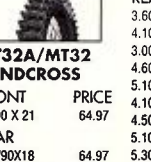
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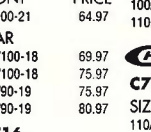
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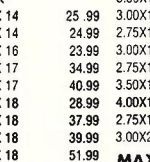
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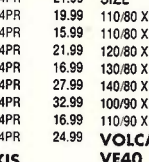
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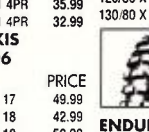
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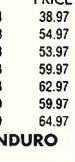
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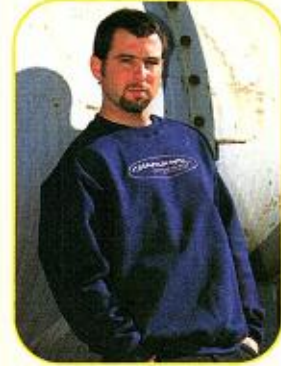
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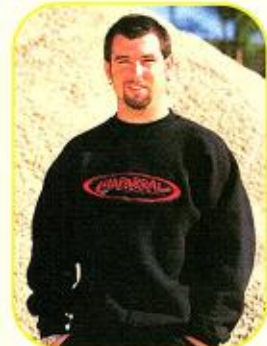
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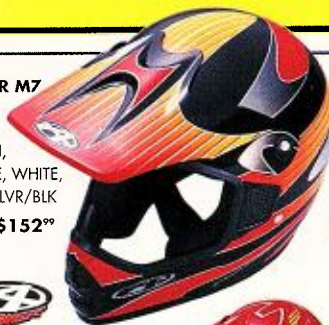
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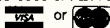
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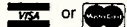
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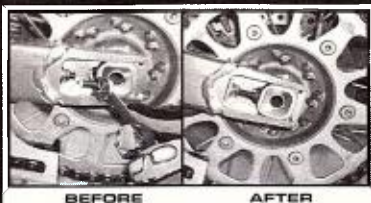
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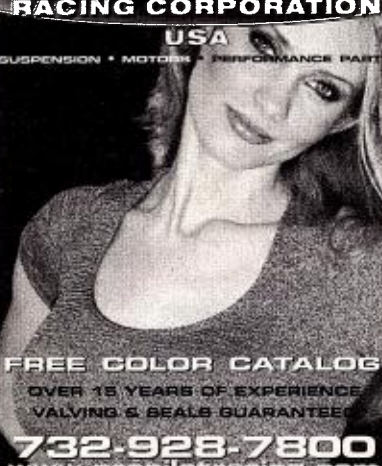
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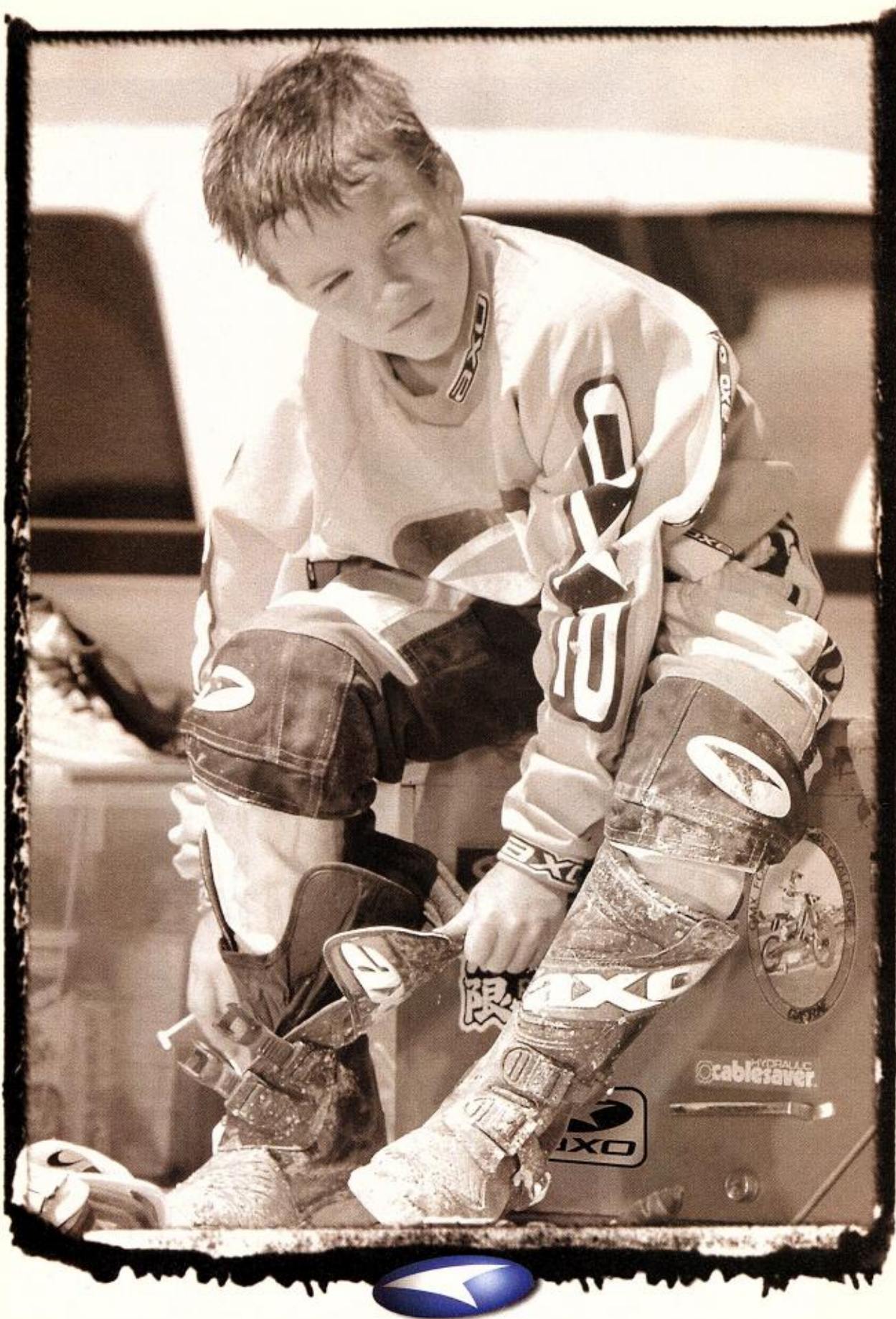
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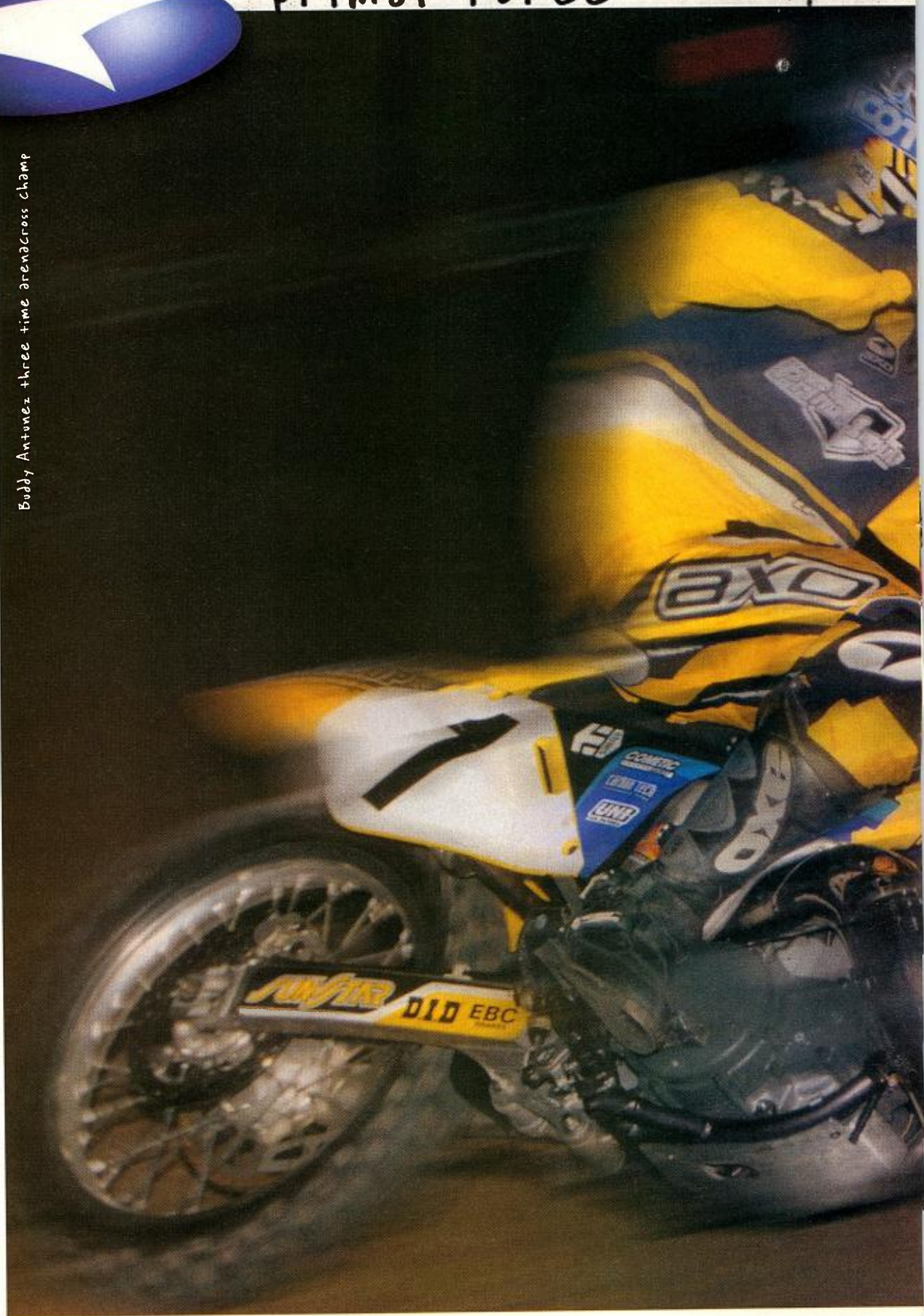
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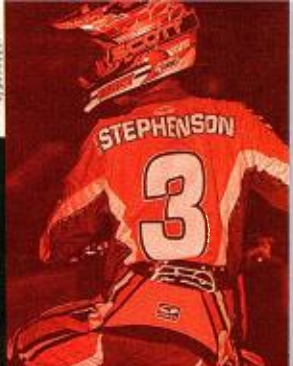


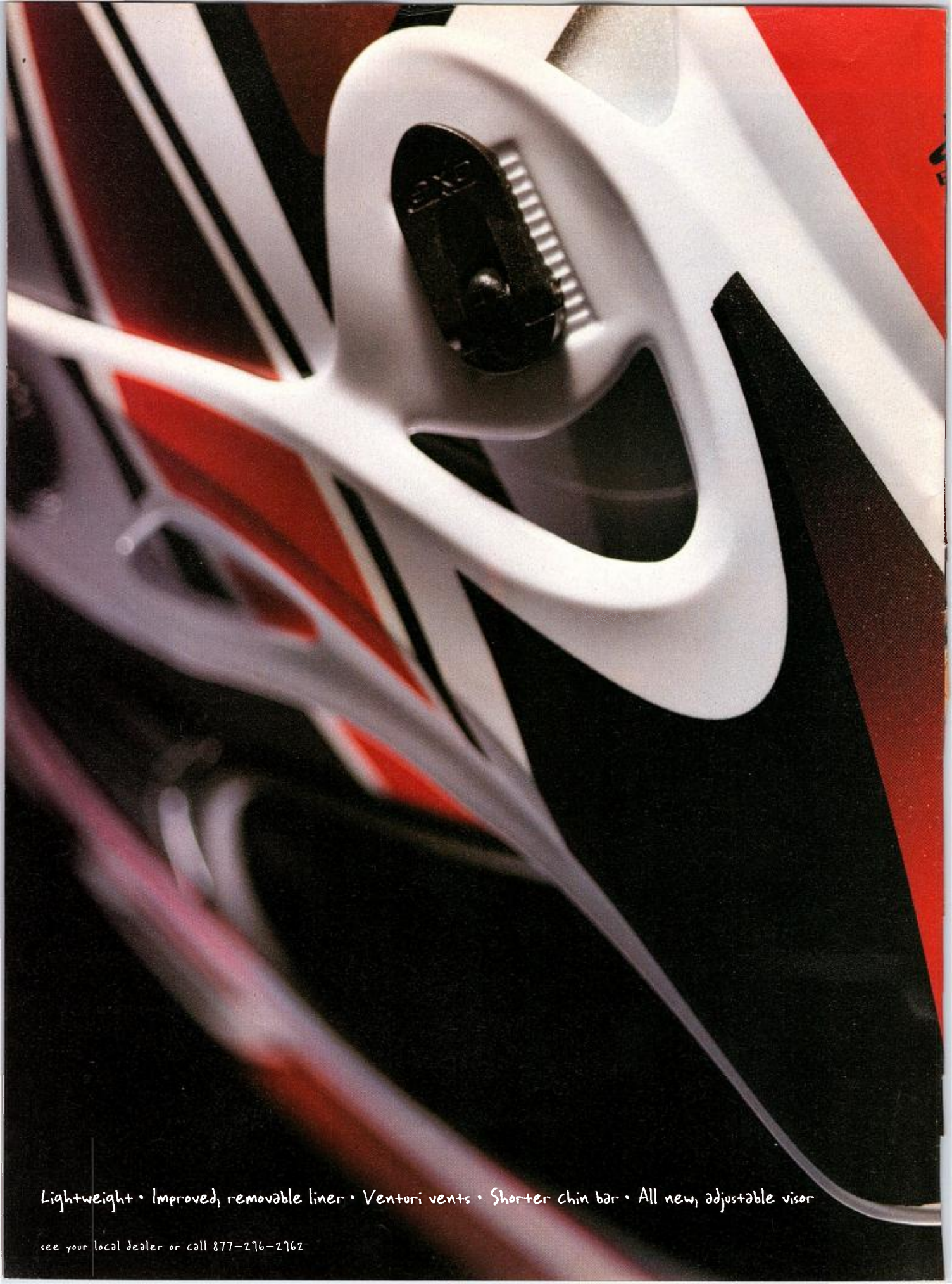
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